

*BY THE SAME AUTHOR*

ELIZABETHAN ROULES AND VAGABONDS  
AND THEIR REPRESENTATION IN  
CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE

OXFORD 1913

# COLLEGE ENGLISH

A MANUAL FOR  
THE STUDY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE  
AND COMPOSITION

BY

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NEW YORK  
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS  
AMERICAN BRANCH 33 WEST 37th STREET  
LONDON TORONTO MELBOURNE AND BOMBAY  
HUMPHREY MILFORD

1913

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*To  
my associates  
in Indiana University  
with whose assistance these ideas  
were first developed in practice  
this book is gratefully  
dedicated*



## PREFACE

THIS book—on the course in which the ideas of it were first worked out—originated in the author's feeling of the importance of making elementary English literature and English composition in the university a more thoughtful a more unmistakably humane study. It undertakes to give the student an insight into the beauty of literature not byhapsodizing about it, nor by analyzing its technique nor by tracing the history of literary forms and movements, but, instead, by what, in the opinion of the writer, is the only true key to it—by trying to understand the meaning. It undertakes to give him an insight into the principles of good writing and to enable him to develop such command over language as it is possible for him to attain, not by fixing his attention primarily on the words which he is using, but, instead, upon the meaning which he wishes to express.

Starting, then, with the assumption that literature is the expression of a certain mode of thought, it undertakes with the aid of a selection of nineteenth century critical essays, to define and enrich that conception and to make clear a few of its implications—to explain the liberal value of literary studies by explaining the meaning of liberal education and showing the place of literature in it.

It then goes on in connection with the study of four English poets—the four which I suppose most people would agree it is most important for the undergraduate to

study if he is to study no others—to illustrate the conception of literature as a form of thought by trying to apprehend a few of the most important ideas which these poets expressed in their works. After reviewing then, in connection with Sidney's *Apologie* the main ideas developed so far, the book undertakes finally (in a chapter which though placed last should be used from the beginning of the course) to indicate the application of these ideas to the student's own writing.

At the end is an Appendix for teachers, in which I have tried to give in compact form such suggestions for the practical working of a course of this kind as it seemed might prove useful. These suggestions are drawn from four years' experience with the course at Indiana University, but as I have stated in the Appendix, they are not offered in the belief that there is any one system of machinery by which these ideas may be best advanced, the aim has been throughout to make the statement of the point of view here embodied flexible enough to suit the widest possible variety of circumstances and uses.

I have made no effort to acknowledge my obligations to the books or men which may have been the source of any of the ideas here expressed. It would have been hard to do so without the addition of a large number of footnotes which would have been out of place in what is designed as an elementary textbook, and pedantic in what pretends to be no contribution to poetic theory but only the re-statement of a position as old as criticism.

It will be clear that this book is intended throughout to be used in connection with the essays and poetry on which it comments or with other material of the same nature. It would be best, in my opinion, for the class to read and

## PREFACE

discuss each chapter *after* they had finished the reading and discussion of the works upon which the chapter is based. The tables of reading and theme subjects in the Appendix are arranged upon this principle. The function of a book of this kind, as I conceive it, is to stimulate thought about literature. It is not meant to supply the student with ready-made opinions, but to impel him to form his own. It is not meant to do his reading for him, nor to make the explanations which should be made by his instructor. It is not meant to be underhand, without the reading, nor is it meant to be an exhaustive statement of the value and interest of the reading which it recommends. When the student has fully entered upon a course of thoughtful literary study, he will need other guides and charts for his voyage. This book is one of those pilots whose work is done when the ship has left the harbor and turned her bows out to sea.

F. A.

The author acknowledges the courtesy of the *Educational Review* in permitting him to reprint several paragraphs from an essay which originally appeared in that journal.





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Here therefore is the first distemper of learning, when  
men study words and not matter

BACON, *Of the Advancement of Learning*

# I

## NEWMAN'S IDEA OF LIBERAL KNOWLEDGE

Most undergraduates, in this practical country of ours, have some reason for going to college. It asked to write an essay on "What I expect from my college course" their answers will be more or less definite, and will reflect the many desires of men the search for the mastery of this subject or that, for this or that practical purpose or, more vaguely, the wish to acquire a "general" education, for the sake of the pleasures and advantages which college training is supposed to bring. Their faith in the university is strong, they come one and all in the belief that she is prepared to satisfy their needs. Yet few or none will express or feel that need for the satisfaction of which the university primarily exists. All the desires of man become in the end desire for understanding the mysteries of his environment and of his own nature, the conditions of his existence. Whereas the animal appears to seek food and shelter and power as the means of living, growing fat, and leaving behind a numerous progeny, the things, which are the end of its life, are to man only a means to the final end of knowledge.

This is the end of the university and of university teaching the solution (or such partial solution as is possible) of the problems of life. The various departments of knowledge (what Newman calls "sciences" in a sense slightly different from our use of the word) are

simply various methods of attack, various aspects of the solution of the fundamental mystery as men have been able to find it out. One solution, the working basis of life, one must make from all, must construct it, each one for himself. No man can do this for another. Each man's education, in reality, must be his own, something which he has thought out for himself. The office of books and of instruction is to put the student in the way of making progress for himself; they cannot make his progress for him. Real knowledge cannot be learned, it can only be acquired by individual thought. A good book, like a good teacher, may help the individual to reach heights which he could never have reached by himself, or, on the other hand, may cramp and restrain him until real advancement becomes impossible, according to the way in which it is used, according to whether it is the stimulus for thought, which it should be, or the rule of thought, which it should not.

The aim of this book is to guide the student in his task of getting from literature the stimulus which it should offer to his thought, the contribution which it should make to his education—in other words, its meaning. Not much can be done in one year, nor in the four years of a university course. One can only make a start. The matter of prime importance is that the start should be in the right direction, that a few underlying principles should be mastered, not that one should have read much, or have written well, but that one should have learned how to read or to write.

The one thing that is most important is to realize that the significance of literature for the reader as well as for him who writes lies in what is said, not in how it is said, in

the subject matter not in the form. The form is secondary, contributive, or better representative. That does not mean that the expression is unimportant, it only means that in any piece of genuine literature the form is so intimately adapted to the ideas that the two are inseparable, and, in so far as the work is perfect form and meaning are one. The only way to know this is the only way to understand what is called form or style is by trying to understand the meaning by realizing that literary genius is power to think.

We shall begin our study by a consideration of certain essays of five prose writers of the nineteenth century whose works will perhaps offer to the beginner the readiest illustration of the principles. Newman, Arnold, Huxley, Ruskin, and Carlyle. The careful reading of these essays on fundamental problems of education and literature should both teach the student to think as he reads and at the same time open his eyes to some of the meaning and possibilities of literary study. After such a preparation we may go on to the more important part of our task the study of poetry from the same point of view. First of all we shall consider Newman's ideas on the meaning of university training.

Newman lived from 1801 to 1890. He was at Oxford during the twenties a student at Trinity and later Fellow of Oriel. He witnessed the partial reorganization of the Oxford curriculum in the direction of those liberal studies which have since made that university so famous. He sympathized with his associates and seniors at Oriel in their defense of these liberal studies against the severe

*utilitarian criticism of the Edinburgh Review* The best years of his life, however, were given up not to education but to theology From the beginning in 1833, he was recognized as a leader in what was to be called the Oxford Movement His studies of the seventeenth century theologians and of the Church Fathers in the effort to codify the theology of the Anglican Church and to authorize her customs led him finally to the Church of Rome In 1845 he became a Roman Catholic In 1854 he was made Rector of the newly-organized Catholic University of Dublin, and the lectures delivered immediately before and during his tenure of that office constitute the book which he called *The Idea of a University* The questions which he discusses are mainly those which were in the air at Oxford in the twenties and they are the questions which are the most vital in American education to-day What is the end of a university course? What value has knowledge aside from utility? What is the difference between information and real knowledge? What is the connection between knowledge and virtue? In addition, and first of all, he discusses the relation of the university to the church, and of profane knowledge to theology in a manner which will not perhaps have much meaning for the Protestant American undergraduate This part of his book full of interest as it is if adequately studied, we may very well omit For the rest the important thing to remember is that Newman is not in the e discourses recommending Catholicism to Protestants but that he is rather urging upon Catholics the advantages of liberal culture, and doing so by arguments which are non-theological and which have equal force for Catholic, Protestant, or Non-believer

One cannot understand what Newman means by liberal knowledge without first getting clearly in mind his conception of a university. The essential character of a university lies for him in its breadth: it is a center, a metropolis of art and learning, all of the world's best gathered into one place. All sciences, all branches of knowledge are there taught, the students come from all quarters of the earth. Every current of thought is there reflected, every form of knowledge is there advanced. This conception occurs frequently in his writings and is elaborated with glowing enthusiasm in one of his *Historical Sketches* which he entitles "What is a University?"

"In the nature of things greatness and unity go together, excellence implies a center. And such, for the third or fourth time, is a University, I hope I do not weary out the reader by repeating it. It is the place to which a thousand schools make contributions, in which the intellect may safely range and speculate, sure to find its equal in some antagonist activity, and its judge in the tribunal of truth. It is a place where inquiry is pushed forward, and discoveries verified and perfected, and rashness rendered innocuous and error exposed by the collision of mind with mind, and knowledge with knowledge. It is a place where the professor becomes eloquent and is a missionary and a preacher, displaying his science in its most complete and most winning form pouring it forth with the zeal of enthusiasm, and lighting up his own love of it in the breasts of his hearers. It is the place where the catechist makes good his ground as he goes, trading in the truth day by day into the ready memory, and wedging and tightening it into the expanding reason. It is a place which wins the admiration of the young by its celebrity, kindles the affections of the middle-aged by its beauty,



and rivets the fidelity of the old by its associations. It is a seat of wisdom, a light of the world, a minister of the faith, an Alma Mater of the rising generation."

So broadly constituted the university does for the student more than give him acquaintance with the special branch or branches of knowledge of which he is in search. It gives him some idea of the extent and the limitations of that particular science, some notion of the world of knowledge as a whole, by the mere fact of his contact with so many interests different from his own. The different "sciences" are for Newman but subdivisions of truth, each is true but only a part of the truth, misleading if taken alone, restrained by contact with other provinces of the world of knowledge. This realization of the interrelation of the science is the sole vantage ground from which it is possible for the student to attain to the mastery of one without at the same time narrowing his outlook and warping his conclusions as to the facts of this one science itself. But in the university in the presence of all forms of knowledge, the very rivalry of other studies keeps students and teachers clear as to the extent and validity of the particular one in which they are engaged.

This understanding of the limits and validity of various branches of knowledge is quite different from the sole pursuit of one. It is this which the university, by virtue of its nature, gives the student over and above the special training which he seeks. This broader outlook Newman calls philosophy; the result of it is the philosophical habit of mind or liberal knowledge. Liberal knowledge is different from information yet information as detailed, thorough and exact as possible is necessary to it. But to this information must be added capacity for thought, the

ability to look at facts not merely from their level but from above, to see their meaning and significance. Liberal knowledge is information transformed by thought. Hence Newman's emphasis upon the value of conversation, not as a means of acquiring information, but as an opportunity for using it, as stimulus to thought.

This cultivation of the mind the ability to use facts, is not the same thing as professional knowledge, although it is of the utmost value to the professional man and may be the result of professional training. But in its essence professional or useful knowledge means the power to do skilfully certain useful things. It implies and often involves a narrowing of the faculties, a concentration upon one task to the exclusion of other interests and other knowledge. The liberally educated man, on the other hand, will view his professional knowledge in the light of a larger whole, will see it not as the whole world of knowledge but as only a part, will understand not merely the facts and rules-of-thumb which he uses daily but the underlying principles which link his occupation with the whole world of science, art, and philosophy. The possession of the power of thought which liberal knowledge implies will give him a wisdom and a resource in the practice of his profession and a pleasure in contemplating its relations with the whole world of knowledge unknown to his more narrowly educated associates. The question is one of attitude rather than of the specific subjects studied. At the present time our efforts to obtain liberally educated professional men often take the form of requiring a double education—first a general course and then a professional one—a plan which involves a large expenditure of time and money, and which is perhaps at some disadvantage in

accomplishing one important thing, namely, in making clear to the student the liberal significance of his professional knowledge. In one very interesting passage Newman indicates that in his opinion such double training is not necessary, that professional knowledge may be so imparted as to have a philosophical as well as a professional significance so as to give the student a liberal rather than a servile attitude toward the information which it is necessary for him to acquire.

If then I am arguing and shall argue, against Professional or Scientific knowledge as the sufficient end of a University Education, let me not be supposed, Gentlemen, to be disrespectful toward particular studies, or arts or vocations and those who are engaged in them. In saying that Law or Medicine is not the end of a University course, I do not mean to imply that the University does not teach Law or Medicine. What indeed can it teach at all if it does not teach something particular? It teaches *all* knowledge by teaching *all branches* of knowledge, and in no other way. I do but say that there will be this distinction as regards a Professor of Law, or of Medicine or of Geology or of Political Economy, in a University and out of it that out of a University he is in danger of being absorbed and narrowed by his pursuit, and of giving lectures which are the lectures of nothing more than a lawyer physician, geologist, or political economist, whereas in a University he will know just where he and his science stand. He has come to it, as it were, from a height, he has taken a survey of all knowledge. He is kept from extravagance by the very rivalry of other studies. He has gained from them a special illumination and largeness of mind and freedom and self-possession and he treats his own in consequence with a philosophy and a resource which he longs not to the study itself but to his liberal education."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Newman *Idea of a University* Discourse VII section 6

In this connection it is important to emphasize Newman's caution against smatterings. Breadth in his estimation does not come from knowing a little of many things, but from knowing a few things well so well as to understand their limitations as well as their truth. The distinction is one of quality, not of quantity—it is a matter of absorbing and digesting. It is conceivable that a given student might know a few things in such a way as to make them really liberal knowledge, while another with twice the number of facts might still be the possessor of mere information with no power of liberal thought. A good illustration, well worth pondering over is Owen Wister's capital story *Philosophy Four*.

What then is the value of what Newman calls liberal knowledge or the philosophical habit of mind? Not learning—it is not extensive enough to merit that name though true scholarship in the sense in which Fichte defines the term, is impossible without it. Not professional skill nor direct utility, though useful knowledge may serve as its basis. Its real end is power of mind—the development of a man's own nature—his capacity for independent thought. Its object is to train a man to be a good member of society in those many relations outside his more personal pursuit of livelihood and fame. In other words its end is the making of an intelligent man—what Newman calls a gentleman—a conception which, in some respects, has never been better defined than at the end of Discourse VII.

“A university training [says Newman] is the great ordinary means to a great but ordinary end, it aims at raising the intellectual tone of society, at cultivating the public mind, at purifying the national taste, at supply

ing true principles to popular enthusiasm and fixed aims to popular aspiration, at giving enlargement and sobriety to the ideas of the age, at facilitating the exercise of political power, and refining the intercourse of private life. It is the education which gives a man a clear conscious view of his own opinions and judgments, a truth in developing them, an eloquence in expressing them, and a force in urging them. It teaches him to see things as they are, to go right to the point to disentangle a skein of thought, to detect what is sophistical and to discard what is irrelevant. It prepares him to fill any post with credit and to master any subject with facility. It shows him how to accommodate himself to others, how to throw himself into their state of mind, how to bring before them his own, how to influence them, how to come to an understanding with them, how to bear with them. He is at home in any society, he has common ground with every class, he knows when to speak and when to be silent, he is able to converse, he is able to listen, he can ask a question pertinently and gain a lesson seasonably, when he has nothing to impart himself, he is ever ready, yet never in the way, he is a pleasant companion and a comrade you can depend upon, he knows when to be serious and when to trifle and has a sure tact which enables him to trifle with gracefulness and be serious with effect. He has the repose of mind which lives in itself while it lives in the world and which has resources for its happiness at home when it cannot go abroad. He has a gift which serves him in public and supports him in retirement without which good fortune is but vulgar, and with which failure and disappointment have a charm."

But the cultivated man as here portrayed, is not, in Newman's opinion necessarily virtuous in the truest sense. His life and character are adjusted to the demands of this world his thought is sufficient for the problems which he

meets day by day, but Newman would deny its power to solve the deepest problems of life and would say of course that the only solution of those mysteries is through faith in God's revelation of a miraculous plan of salvation, and through obedience to the conditions of that plan

## II

### ARNOLD'S IDEA OF CULTURE

THE nineteenth century in England was an age of expansion—that is to say of remarkable progress along many lines at the same time. In the first place, it was an era of great industrial prosperity which advanced by such enormous strides that England took first rank in manufacturing and shipping among the powers of the world. Her princes and kings of finance grew steadily richer and richer while for some dark reason, her poorer classes grew poorer and poorer, seeming by every invention which should have made their work lighter and their condition of life easier to be plunged further into more and more hopeless poverty. It was an age of intellectual progress as well. Natural science, under the impetus of the conceptions formulated by Darwin and his associates, took possession of new fields of discovery and went forward at such a rate as to overshadow all other branches of knowledge and threaten to introduce its methods into every department of thought. At the same time the age was one of political advancement—it was pre-eminently the period of the struggle of the masses for political power, for extension of the right of suffrage—the period in which the great lower classes of England insisted upon and gained the right to rule themselves. It was also an age of change and popular advancement in education. Free schools multiplied, and in place of the older classical standards

we find a growing tendency to measure educational values by the standard of utility, the more and more frequent introduction into the curricula of the schools of those subjects which are directly and immediately useful for gaining a livelihood. Last of all, the nineteenth century was a period of great religious changes, of dissatisfaction with the Church of England, of the birth and increase of many Protestant sects, of the simplification of the creed, and of decline in religious belief caused by the advance of scientific conceptions of knowledge and proof which attacked vigorously all that might be call superstitious in the creed and customs of the Established Church. The eighteenth century had been an age of immorality and veiled skepticism the nineteenth was one of higher moral standards, of intense idealism, and of frank rejection of such beliefs as now seemed impossible to an educated mind.

The result of this expansion was on every hand disorder and confusion, a lack of any clear perception of the drift of things the people were morally, intellectually, and politically at sea. There was no lack of those who offered to guide the realm to peace and safety, but there were few who really saw clearly and their advice was on the whole little heeded. The period bears many striking resemblances to conditions at the present day in the United States. We have the same parallel advance of progress and poverty, we have the same struggle of the masses for political power not of course, due to lack of the vote but from lack of knowing how to make the vote effective, we have the same confusion in intellectual matters the same restless search for an adequate curriculum for the schools, the same prophets of a new era of knowledge whose prophecies we dare not trust the same bias toward prac-



tical utility the same confusion and decline in religion. It is this similarity between conditions in England in the nineteenth century and in America to-day which makes the writings of Newman, Arnold, Huxley, Ruskin, and Carlyle of such great interest and value to us in working out a solution of our own difficulties, and so striking an illustration of the connection between literary thought and everyday life.

Matthew Arnold lived from 1822 to 1888. He was the son of Dr. Thomas Arnold, the famous headmaster of Rugby. In 1841 he graduated with honors at Oxford, the next year, just as Newman was going over to the Roman Church, he became a Fellow of Oriel. He followed various employments, chiefly that of inspector of schools, until 1853. From 1857 to 1867 he was Professor of Poetry at Oxford, his lectures immediately took high rank as criticism, he wrote poetry as well, and by 1867 he stood among the foremost of English literary men.

Arnold was a close student of the manifold currents of thought, of the confused and struggling social life of his time. A representative of classical culture, an apostle of the so-called higher criticism of the Bible, a student of the modern literature of other nations, Arnold brought all his intellectual resources to bear upon the problems of his own day. By nature he was a schoolmaster, he had perfect faith in his theories of literature and culture, and he advocated a humanism of his own as a specific for the evils of his time. From 1867 he devoted his life not primarily to criticism in the ordinary sense of that word, but to the promulgation of his theories of culture and their application to the state, to religion, and to literature. *Culture*

*and Anarchy* is the first and, in some respects, the most interesting of the utterances of that programme, whether one can accept the views there advanced or not, it is well worth the study of every man who expects to be an intelligent citizen or who wishes to understand the bearing of literature upon political life

Arnold's simple prescription for the cure of the complex political, social, and intellectual ills of his age was, "Get culture" For him culture meant the assimilation of the best thought of the present and the past, of England and of other countries Its end was conduct, to enable men to do right by first knowing what was right, the improvement of society by the training of worthy members of society, "to make reason and the will of God prevail" Arnold was fond of using nicknames of his own selection, catch words which make it easy to get a superficial idea of his books without really understanding the depth of his thought, and which have always furnished a ready opening for satirical attacks upon his ideas His chapters on "Sweetness and Light" and "Hebraism and Hellenism" are really concerned with the relation of Intelligence and the Sense of Beauty to Morality—the relation between culture and conduct

Morality, the sum total of right living, right action in all relations of life, was for Arnold the end of culture, which is identical in effect with religion Indeed Arnold measured religion by its moral value, he treats Jesus primarily as a moral teacher The last word to humanity, he says, in an eloquent passage in the Preface to *Culture and Anarchy* must always be, Do the best you know

"If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them!"—the last word for infirm humanity will always

be that For this word, reiterated with a power now sublime, now affecting but always admirable our race will, as long as the world lasts, return to Hebraism, and the Bible, which preaches this word will for ever remain, as Goethe called it not only a national book, but the Book of the Nations '.

This abiding sense of the necessity of doing the best we know he calls Hebraism For it the civilizations of the western world must rest forever indebted to the Hebrews, for their example and for the supreme and final way in which they have expressed this idea in the literature of the Bible It is this idea which gives what there is of greatness to English Puritanism of the seventeenth century and the present

But, Arnold says for the ignorant man morality is merely negative resisting sin putting down the animal nature, obeying the commandments Thou shalt not To Arnold this is not enough it is pathetic to have men speaking of such a victory as if it implied perfection, and what he considers the inadequacy and the failure of Puritanism lies in the fact that such a negative victory is its sole idea of the perfect life For that better part which lies beyond the mere negative victory over sin and which alone can make that victory permanent we must go not to the Hebrew element of our civilization but to the Greek

Hellenism as Arnold defines it, contains two main elements intelligence and the sense of beauty, or, as he metaphorically terms them Sweetness and Light Culture is the search for perfection and for it these are no less necessary than the instinct for morality In order to do right in a real and complete sense one must know what is right, and this is not a matter of revealed commandments

but of thought. Ignorance must result in wrong action. Stupid things done in the name of righteousness are a nightmare to Arnold, they are to him the great and constantly renewed barrier to the regeneration of the English people. His countrymen are content to rest in their ignorance, their minds are asleep and so long as they are content so to rest, there is no hope for a solution of their troubles. Curiosity in the best sense is a search for excellence, and of this curiosity his countrymen have little or none. Even the name of it has required at their hands an ill repute.

But culture for Arnold is more than reason, more than is ordinarily considered the province of the intellect alone. It includes also that full appreciation of values and meanings, which we call the sense of beauty. The appreciation of beauty is to Arnold a form of knowing, a perception of finer shades of meaning. It relates knowledge to other sides of our nature. It gives to conduct the higher virtues of tact, heroism, nobility. It is an important element in much that we call philosophy and religion, and without it man must ever fall short of any standard of perfection. A few sentences from the Introduction to Ward's *English Poets* will suggest his idea.

"We should conceive of poetry worthily, and more highly than it has been the custom to conceive of it. We should conceive of it as capable of higher uses and called to higher destinies, than those which in general men have assigned to it hitherto. More and more mankind will discover that we have to turn to poetry to interpret life for us, to console us, to sustain us. Without poetry, our science will appear incomplete, and most of what now passes with us for religion and philosophy will be replaced by poetry."

The three elements of culture, in Arnold's opinion, are morality, intelligence, and the sense of beauty, the most important for any nation is that which is most lacking. It is in the end which he conceives for culture that one sees the main difference between Arnold's theory of education and Newman's. For Arnold knowledge does produce virtue, the pursuit of culture is the pursuit of the best that is possible to man. For Newman the requirement of liberal knowledge is the requirement of the qualities of the man of the world, the gentleman. These are qualities eminently desirable for living in the world. Newman would be glad to see Catholics acquire them in the British Isles as the Anglicans in his day acquired them in their universities. But to be a man of the world is not to be assured of the salvation of the soul, is not to require virtue in the highest sense, but only a worldly imitation of it. *For true virtue for salvation, only revealed religion* (as he would say, only the Catholic Church) is adequate, and the benefits of this religion accrue alike to educated and uneducated, to ignorant and wise. It is no part of our purpose here to pronounce upon these two points of view, the question is one which each individual must decide for himself. It may not be amiss, however, to point out that the question cannot be ignored, and that the solution of it affects profoundly one's attitude towards literature and towards all human knowledge.

Arnold objected ordinarily to all detailed programmes of reform. The grounds of his objections, often misunderstood, were that most proposed reform are only a means of doctoring symptoms, they leave the underlying causes unaffected, they obscure principles and lend only partial

and temporary relief. Once the true causes of our difficulties are understood there will naturally be needed a certain machinery of bills and measures to set right such matters (not the most important) as can be so amended, but so-called practical reformers are worshippers of this machinery to the neglect of the ends which machinery is destined to serve. The end of life to them, as shown by their propaganda, is physical comfort, wealth, increased trade, universal suffrage, the liberty to do as we please—not the culture and wisdom, not the spiritual improvement which they might serve, and the search for which alone makes wealth and comfort and liberty productive of good rather than evil. No reforms will work until this fundamental aim is clear, that the end of life is spiritual culture, that the people should have light and that the light should set them free.

The result, according to Arnold, of looking at problems of government and politics from the standpoint of enlightened thought will be to make men see more clearly the ends to be served, will be to eliminate the grosser part of their nature—the stupid self-seeking which corrupts all politics and is most fatal of all to those who gain the mastery. The result would be to give us laws and institutions representing not the worst part of our natures, the stupidest and the meanest part, but rather laws and institutions representing the best of us, our truest thought, our noblest character, our best selves. In his scheme this is to be the result of the power of ideas working and fermenting among the people. It is to be the result of labor and of patience and of time. Meanwhile radical measures, shouting, elections, new parties, and new laws only waste time and obscure the issue. Hence his opposition to the multi-

tude of so-called reformers which the troubles of the age produced

Arnold has been much criticised and his political writings perhaps never taken over seriously. But his theories are, after all, hard to dismiss. They have a significance especially great for a democracy where the people can do all if they but know what to do, where the attention of most men is centered upon machinery, and where few see the ends which the machinery of government and wealth and liberty could serve. One of the most frequent criticisms of Arnold's ideas is that they lack a definite programme, that he has devised no plan of carrying them out. He would have been the first to admit this and to deprecate haste in acquiring it. Meanwhile our popular state supported universities may well be considered as a step taken by the people in the direction in which he points, and which may carry us far if only the eye of the university be kept single and its face toward the light.

The political writings of Arnold were not outside the limits of his function and duty as a critic, as he understood that term. He defined literature very widely as the record of the best that has been thought and said in the world. The poet is the prophet to his age, the thinker the revealer of truth, the commentator upon the life which he portrays. But the poet Arnold was is a student of life rather than of books, a student of his own age and his own people, not of foreign countries nor of the past. The critic on the other hand is the scholar, the student of all literature. His work his contribution to the poet and to the readers of the poet is to keep in circulation a current of true and fresh ideas drawn from the best of his study and reflection, which will illuminate the life and thought of his own time,

furnish the poet with standards of comparison mount him upon a height from which to view it supply him with ideas which are the material of his songs It is the least of the functions of the critic to pronounce upon books as they appear, to say that this is good and that bad this great and that small He is rather the schoolmaster to his age furnishing poets and readers alike with that store of ideas which will destroy narrow provincial standards will enable them to profit by the best thought of other ages and other nations enable them to understand the worth of the life they lead clearly in the light of other thought, to see life steadily and see it whole



### III

## LITERATURE AND SCIENCE

THE question of the relative values of literature and science has been a point of keen educational controversy for over half a century, and is perhaps the one most important question in education to-day. These two departments, if for literature we substitute art in general, divide between them the whole world of human knowledge every subject may be referred to one or the other or shown to be a mixture of the two. Philosophy, which might seem for a moment to lie outside both, is really a criticism of the one or the other or of both, which undertakes to say what they ultimately mean. Hence in seeking to look at literature in its relations to other knowledge, we come at once face to face with the question of the relation of literature, or art to science. This question like every other of importance, is one which neither the student nor his instructor need expect to settle out of hand. Our purpose here is the far humbler one of opening it up, of putting the student in the way of thinking about it, of suggesting to him a point of view which whether he accept it or not, may be a point of departure from which he may expect, when in later years his ways of thinking have matured to work out a solution for himself. For the question between literature and science is in the end a question of personal ways of thinking and the essential thing in treating it is that different points of view should each have a fair hear-

ing, that each student should be able, after due thought, to determine his own natural position and to understand that of one who differs from him

Perhaps the most interesting way of opening the discussion will be to look at three essays on the subject, by Newman, Huxley, and Arnold. In his lecture entitled "Literature" and printed as the second of the discourses on 'University Subjects' in the second part of the *Idea of a University* Newman undertakes to define literature by this most fruitful and suggestive of all methods of defining it, by comparing and contrasting it with science. The gist of his reasoning is that literature is the expression of personal, subjective thought while science is the expression of external objective fact, a description of something which exists outside man's mind and independently of it. Hence the language of science is a collection of what he calls symbols, words which have one fixed meaning for all men, so that any scientific statement takes as little as possible of the character of the man who makes it. The language of literature on the other hand is personal, literary style is a shadow of the writer's ways of thinking. In so far as a man has literary genius he will mold language to his own uses, make it reflect the intimate, personal, unique character of his thought. Literary power, in his opinion, is the power of expressing neither less nor more than oneself. The greater and truer this thought, the greater the author and his power, but the literary quality lies in the personal element. Scientific writing, in contrast to this, in so far as it is perfectly scientific, is without personal style, a merely possible reflection of fact untinged by the human mind.

My own position, as the reader will see presently, would claim less for science and more for literature. It would assert that a human being can make no picture of reality which is uncolored by the human mind, that a scientific hypothesis no less than a work of art, obeys the laws of order and design—of reasonableness, one might say—which are necessary attributes of anything we can understand. And it would assert that artistic, poetic, literary pictures of the world, whose aim is to picture what we call its beauty portray in doing so a fundamental aspect of what we think of as its real nature.

Huxley's address on "Science and Culture," delivered at the opening of Sir Josiah Mason's Science College at Birmingham in 1880, and printed as the sixth essay in *Science and Education* is a commentary, from the point of view of science on Matthew Arnold's theory of culture as a criticism of life based on the best that has been thought and said in the world. Huxley accepts Arnold's conception of culture as a criticism of life, that is as something more than mere information or learning as implying a theory of life thought out by the individual on the basis of the soundest knowledge and best thought which the world has produced. But he opposes the tendency which he attributes to Arnold, to assume that the best that has been thought and said in the world is found in its literature alone. It is, he asserts, impossible to make an adequate theory of life while ignoring the knowledge and the thought contributed by physical science. The Renaissance was a revival of Greek science as well as of Greek letters, any humanism which sees in Greek thought only Greek literary thought is incomplete and twisted in its view of Greek civilization, just as a similar

point of view would be incomplete and unjust to the present

Huxley would not advocate a culture based exclusively on science. The question is one of aptitude and opportunity, and for the student who has not the time or ability adequately to read the classic literatures he would favor instruction, along with his science, in the modern, and, if possible, training in music or drawing or some other branch of art.

Arnold, lecturing in America three or four years later, answered Huxley's arguments in a discourse which he called "Literature and Science" and which was printed in 1885 as the second of his *Discourses in America*. He accepts Huxley's point that the results of science ancient or modern, are a part of the best that has been thought and said in the world, and insists that such was the meaning he intended by that phrase. Commenting further on a statement of a certain unnamed "President of the Section for Mechanical Science in the British Association" who had declared that natural science was, on the whole, a more useful material of education than history or literature, Arnold says that this is the usual point of view of science, and he gives his reasons for disagreeing with it.

Human life, he says, is built up by the power of conduct, the power of intellect and knowledge, the power of beauty, and the power of social life and manners. But these powers, so far from being isolated elements of character, are constantly related by us, one to the other. For example, we tend constantly to relate knowledge to the sense for conduct and the sense for beauty and in any case where this proves impossible weariness and dissatis-

faction are the result. The permanent hold of literature on the human mind lies in the fact that it continually helps us to relate other knowledge to these powers of beauty and conduct. This relation, in Arnold's opinion, science does not make for itself, and, as the province of science widens and its lore grows in importance and extent, we shall, in his belief, be more and more dependent on the guidance of humane letters in working out for ourselves the meaning of this new knowledge. Facts not so related to our sense for beauty and our sense for conduct however interesting in themselves and however important for practical ends, leave the deeper mind untouched make for one-sided, incomplete development, are an imperfect means of education.

The question between Huxley and Arnold, it will readily be seen, is not sharply defined in this discussion. In regard to most of the points on which they seem to differ they are really at one—that the essence of culture, of education, is thought, and that for this thought the true basis includes the ideas of science as well as those of literature. Their agreement goes further than that. Arnold's explanation of the human necessity of relating all knowledge to the sense for beauty and the sense for conduct is only a definition of what he means by thinking, and the difference between them becomes the personal one of the particular subject which each prefers, in which each individual finds the most illumination and stimulus and to questions of expediency in the choice of one literature or another. Here, of course they could never be brought together, but it is easy to see that each can be justified on their common ground. Any knowledge which is real knowledge and not mere information relates itself to the

sense for beauty and the sense for conduct, all poetry and all morality reflect the science of their age. Literature is perhaps man's greatest expression of the total meaning of life, but it is not the sole expression of it. The sense of beauty is only the sense of wonder and delight and awe which comes to man when he finds, or thinks he finds, the real nature of the world and the laws of life conforming to the principles of order and reasonableness, to the conceptions of good and bad, which exist in his own mind. The sense of conduct is only the sense for putting all the acts of his life in harmony with these laws which seem to be imprinted in the fibers of his mind and figured in the courses of the stars. Science is an attempt to discover this reality, never more than dimly apprehended by the poet or the seer, to find out the conditions of life and to put man in harmony with them. To relate itself to his sense for beauty and to his sense for conduct it need only do in the mind of any particular man what it certainly did in the mind of Huxley—achieve, in some degree, its ambitions, be true to its highest aims.

In all the essays we have just reviewed the emphasis is placed upon the differences between literature and science rather than upon their similarities. It is true that one attracts and engages a type of mind different from the other. To the followers of science literature often seems mere play or affectation, a drawing-room matter of child conceits, and "fine words." To the full grasp of literature science may seem only an unwelcome method of analyzing the processes of nature to the neglect of the life comfort all this which is the grace of civilization.

alone give those comforts an adequate excuse for existence

There is in this contrast a certain amount of truth, but the likenesses between science and literature are of much greater importance for the understanding of either. In one of the most celebrated of all explanations of the point of view of the scientist, Huxley expressly repudiates the common opinion of the end of scientific knowledge. He uses the figure of the Alpine mother toiling up the mountain side, as she walks her fingers ceaselessly at work, knitting stockings for her children. This industry is very commendable, he says, and the warm woollen stockings very good things for the cold Alpine winter, but no one would say that because the mother knits them thus tirelessly her principal function is to provide her children with clothing. This she does but, if she is a real mother, she does more and better things for them. So with science it also has an end other and much more important than providing material comforts—to solve so far as it can by its methods the mysteries of life. The purpose of science is the same quest for truth which one finds in literature. It is the expression of man's thought about life and the world around him, the explanation of it, so far as man has been able to go from its peculiar point of view. Literature is no more and no less than this, the expression of man's thought about life and the world we live in, only from another point of view, following other methods. The fundamental aims of the two are identical.

Science and literature engage different types of mind but this difference is commonly over-emphasized. The scientist is often supposed to represent the type of cold logical calculation without imagination without illu-

sions, the impartial recorder of the results of experiments which he makes without bias and records without emotion. On the other hand the literary genius is supposed to be the enemy of logic and reason, living in a world of dreams, rapt in a divine frenzy, attendant only on the words of a mysterious voice within which in some mystical manner causes him to write or sing what all the world delights to hear. Each opinion represents an exaggeration impossible to the discriminating thinker.

The truth is that each pursuit occupies the whole mind of its followers. The faculties which we call by a false division imagination, reason, emotion, are all present together in every act of thought. Nowhere is there more demand for imagination than in the formulation of a scientific hypothesis: the world, as science has constructed it, is the product of that faculty no less than a novel, a play, or an epic poem. An interesting resemblance might be traced between what one might call the architecture of a scientific theory—its order, its reasonableness, its balance of parts, on the one hand, and that of a great novel or of a Gothic cathedral on the other. Each invests countless details with a single and unified meaning. Each obeys the principles of design inherent in the human mind. Each puts into a complex world of matter and events a meaning which is the product of bold, original, independent thought. The methods of the two types of thought are different, but not their essential nature nor their fundamental aim.

"It is an open secret [says Sir Frederick Pollock, in his biography of Clifford prefixed to the *Lectures and Essays*] to the few who know it, but a mystery and a stumbling block to the many, that Science and Poetry are





language as well, seeks for symbols with but one unmistakable meaning, is content to limit the range of his vision in order to see everything clearly within that range. The "purer" and more exact the science, the further is it removed from the conditions of actual life, the narrower its aspect.

Literature, all art, on the other hand, deals with the world with something of the fullness and concreteness of reality. It treats numberless complex details, complicated motives and situations, and, doing so, must treat them vaguely. Of course art makes its selection, its world is not so complex as the world of everyday, but the details selected are treated concretely, the problem is never reduced to the abstract simplicity of science. The picture which art offers us, though vague is relatively complete, it attempts to measure the total significance of the details of which it treats. An artist paints a landscape or a poet describes it. Each explains the meaning which the landscape, as a whole, has for him. Each makes it real, as we say and yet each treats the details impressionistically, by a wavy motion of the brush, or by a figure of speech. The one thing which each makes clear is his idea of the total meaning. The rest, even in the case of the most uncompromising realist, is for the most part vague. We supply by the aid of the imagination what the artist could not portray. The language of art speaks to the imagination. It suggests as much as it says, its meaning is the sum total of all that it implies, it seizes and makes use of what science attempts to discard—the overtones the connotations of words and lines and colors, which while they are vague yet add concreteness to the picture and fullness to the meaning.

No one scientist would deal with this landscape as did the painter and the poet. The geologist would deal with one aspect of it, the chemist with another, the botanist with another, and if there were animals or human figures there would immediately be work for the zoologist, the anthropologist, the psychologist, perhaps for scientists of every sort. The account of each would be clear, but fragmentary and violently abstracted from the concrete scene before us. We should have from each an infinitesimal part of its total significance, but that small part so stated as to be true for all times and all conditions, while the artist and the poet had given us its meaning for them at one moment, in one mood, under one set of conditions, but, at the same time, its meaning as a whole. Science is content with partial truth so that part be exact. Literature art, is content with vagueness in details, with limitations of time and mood, in order to grasp, in some fashion, the significance of the whole.

The peculiar character of each the limitations of science and of art, are born of the limitations of man's mind. We say that science is a search for truth, art is a search for beauty. In reality each is a search for the meaning of the whole of the world and the whole of life, to which meaning we give now the name of truth and now the name of beauty. Science and art differ as to their methods, but these methods, though different tend to converge. Science is fragmentary and abstract only because it must be so to be clear. Its ideal is a complete account which could be applied concretely to the whole. Art is vague only because it must be so to be complete. Its ideal is to see the meaning of the whole under given conditions so clearly that one could reason back to the nature of each part and

the effect of other conditions with the exactness of science. From the point of view of omniscience, science and art would be the same. Hence it is high praise to say that Dante writes like Luclid, or that the works of Huxley or Tyndall are literature.

There have been great scientists who had no interest in art or literature and poets who had no interest in science, but such are far from being the rule. Certainly if one follows Newman's reasoning one must believe that each is the better in his own pursuit for understanding its relation to the other, that no man is really educated or can know either liberally without knowing something of both.

## IV

### LITERATURE AND ECONOMICS

ONE of the most interesting chapters in the history of English literary thought of the last century is that concerning the reflections of Carlyle and Ruskin on the business methods of the day and their relation to the classical school of political economists. Political economy is, at least in ideal, a science. As formulated by Ricardo and James Mill, its aim was to codify and reduce to order the principles underlying modern business—the rules of the game played in modern industrial nations for the prize of wealth. It did not purport to approve or disapprove necessarily of the moral standards of this game, its intention was to explain the facts as they exist and the principles underlying them. It did not purport to give a full account of modern life. Like all science it was abstract and incomplete, it viewed its subject matter from one angle merely, it did not attempt to measure the factors which might modify its abstract conclusions in real concrete situations.

*Everyone is familiar, in a superficial way at least, with the conceptions of this classical political economy. The desires of man all tend to measure and to express themselves in terms of material wealth. He tends to seek always the greatest possible amount of satisfaction at the least possible expenditure of labor, hence to buy always in*

the cheapest market and sell in the dearest. The prices of the various commodities which he buys and sells, including that of his own labor, are regulated automatically by the laws of supply and demand.

For these thinkers man was, from the economic point of view, a buying and selling machine, in constant competition and struggle with other buying and selling machines. Any given economic situation was the resolution of their strife. They admitted freely that, in actual life, other factors—sentiment, generosity, nobility, pity, charity—entered in freely to modify the results. But their point was that the way to arrive at a true understanding of any economic situation was to consider first the basic forces of selfishness and greed, measure the fundamental economic strife, and then make such allowance for sentiment as the conditions demanded.

They formulated the conception of the economic man. We have a saying at the present time that corporations have no souls. A large corporation engaged in the business of mining and selling coal is supposed, according to the popular idea, to operate in a perfectly automatic manner. It will pay its miners and workmen as little as they will take, it will sell its coal as high as it can, restrained only by the laws of supply and demand as controlled by itself or presented by competition. Its sole object in business is to make profits, and it does not abate these profits either to help the freezing poor in cities or starving miners' families at the mines. The shareholders may use these profits later for various charitable and philanthropic purposes; the sole concern of the corporation is to make them. The economic man of the classical political economy was like this. He was an abstraction, his buying and selling

characteristics were isolated from the remainder of his nature. The economist said nothing about the real man, he might be good, charitable, kind, or whatever. Only in his business functions he was selfish and indolent, buying as cheap and selling as dear as he could, restrained not by a sense of fairness or justice, but only by competition and the force of the laws of supply and demand. The economist separated the business functions of a human being from the rest of him in order to study those functions clearly, just as the chemist in order to study the properties of iron first separates it from the ore in order to simplify his problem and rule out irrelevant factors.

John Ruskin was born in 1819, took his B.A. at Oxford in 1842, published the first four volumes of his best known work, *Modern Painters* at intervals from 1843 to 1856, and when, about 1857, he turned his attention to political economy he had already won for himself the position of leading art critic of his day. There is no space here to describe his brilliant, erratic, versatile character and talents. Up to 1857 these had chiefly been employed on matters relating to art, and his opinions were so widely accepted as to have great influence on the price of paintings in the market. When he began to write on political economy it was then believed by everyone, as it is by some people still, that he was invading a field which had no connection with his work or abilities, wasting his time and making himself ridiculous. Nevertheless it is easy to see, at this distance, why his interest in the one subject should lead him to the other. He believed that the value of art lay in its expression of truth, that its end was to serve

life, to make men better and nobler, and it was only natural that he should in his study of it study also the social life which he believed it was the highest mission of art to serve. It was inevitable that he should see that life must first be made possible before it can be made noble. The result was his lifelong interest in the working classes, his manifold and lavish charities in which he dissipated a fortune of nearly half a million dollars, his many Utopian schemes for ideal communities where life should be made simple and free and work dignified and noble and, most important result of all, the three or four works which contain his criticism of the then accepted theories of political economy and the ethics of business.

Many of his ideas about economics and social reform Ruskin owed, as he says himself, to the writings and conversation of Carlyle. In many books, most notably perhaps in *Past and Present*, Carlyle had denounced what he considered to be the causes of the industrial evils of the day. His character is very different from Ruskin's, his thought, on the whole, deeper and truer, but on essential points (in criticism no less than in economics) their ideas tend in much the same direction.

In 1857 Ruskin published in the *Cornhill Magazine* a series of four very remarkable papers which contain the main points of his attack upon the classical political economy and the mercantile morality it encouraged, and which he later put together in the volume called *Unto This Last*. The center of his attack was against the conception of the economic man and the ideas of wealth and value implied in that conception. His point, put briefly, was that while a theory of political economy based upon such a conception might be made to conform to the prin-



ciples of logic, it had no more validity, as far as its application to life is concerned, than a theory of gymnastics based upon the assumption that men have no skeletons. The soulless economic man had no lessons, he contended, for the real human being. The introduction of soul, of sentiment and human feeling, did not merely modify the results, it changed the problem altogether, as completely as the introduction of a skeleton would change the system of gymnastics. The classical political economy, according to Ruskin, mistook altogether the significance of the actions it attempted to explain. The wealth of a man or of a nation does not proceed from what is sold but from what is consumed, value is not to be measured in terms of supply and demand but rather in life-producing power. The end of the truly economic administration of the body politic is the production of healthy, happy life, which is the true wealth of individual or nation. Other games for other stakes might perhaps be played with the same cards, but no other game is worth the candle.

The most important element in wealth, according to Ruskin, is the moral element. Money and material goods give one power over labor only in proportion to the inequality of the distribution. At its greatest such power is vastly inferior to the moral power of the affections. A true vision of the phenomena of business and labor shows the goal of human effort to be the search for life and for life more abundantly. We only falsify the facts when we interpret these efforts as a search for material wealth. It is this false interpretation which has poisoned the sources of our well being and made money a curse rather than a blessing, set society at civil war when the happiness of all men calls for peace.

We are not here concerned primarily with the soundness, from an economic point of view, of Ruskin's position. In the details of his scheme one finds many assertions which, from the point of view of common sense, seem highly doubtful and self-contradictory. He has not in any way worked out a complete system, probably could not have done so. On the other hand, it is interesting to note that at least one man who has a right to speak in the name of the science of economics asserts that the basis of Ruskin's protest is sound, that without seeing clearly all the details he did see clearly the fundamental significance of the old political economy, the direction in which it tended, and the real meaning of commercial life. Whatever the effect of the work of Ruskin and Carlyle upon the actual principles of political economy, it would perhaps be admitted by most experts in that science that the point of view expressed in this protest must make a difference in the way in which those principles are held.

This last is for our consideration of literature and science the vital matter. The economic protest of Ruskin and Carlyle is a striking example of the difference between the literary point of view and the scientific. It is almost an ideal illustration of Newman's theory of the interrelation of the different departments of knowledge and the advantages, for the student of any particular one, of an outlook which will enable him to see it from above, to understand its relations to other subjects. The question is not so much one of the truth or error of any particular

\* Prof. J. A. Hobson. Cp his *John Ruskin Social Reformer* (1893), his *Science of Wealth* (Home University Library) and his edition of *Unto This Last* (Cassell).

set of conclusions as of the nature and extent of their validity, it is only from what we have been calling the liberal point of view that the student can see this in regard to his own knowledge and thus attain to the fullest mastery of it.

But the illustration here offered, apt and striking as it is, if pressed too far, may tend to be misleading. The effect of the liberal point of view upon a man's work in any one field is likely, in actual life, to manifest itself in a finer and subtler modification of his achievements, less easy to analyze or point out, but no less valuable in the end. He will not perhaps reorganize the body of knowledge of his profession, nor revolutionize its practice, but he will understand it more fully and practise it more wisely. The physician who is also a reader of poetry, the literary man who is likewise a student of science, will have his outlook upon his own profession modified not in any abrupt and violent way—subtly, in ways hardly noticeable even to himself, the one will be restrained from the too implicit faith in science which is the undoing of so many able physicians; will estimate a little more truly the human, the mental factor in each of the perplexing problems daily offered him, and the other will prune out in a more sober and orderly fashion the extravagances which are so often a blot upon the most glorious vision of beauty. By being first a better, a more complete man, each is a better specialist, but the difference is one which only the knowing will perceive, not the difference between the bad and the good, but between the very good and the best. So in numberless minute and delicate ways the philosophical habit of mind—the best and highest gift of the university—will modify the views of her children, will make them better

individuals, will give them the peace and the serenity, the order and the sobriety, the humility and the power, which are born of knowledge, which will make their lives a boon to society and a satisfaction to themselves

## V

### THE HERO AS POET

By the term Hero, in *Heroes and Hero Worship* Carlyle means a leader of thought. In each of the various vocations in which his hero appears he is always a man who sees more clearly than his fellows the conditions of life. His power and his victory lie in the fact that his actions are based on reality. Men attribute a divine nature to truth, and something of this divinity hedges round the seer who is the revealer of truth to his fellow men. It is because of this that in the earliest times the hero was considered to be a god and in all ages right minded men have done well to pay him a respect akin to worship. As prophet and priest, as poet and man of letters, as soldier and king, the real power of the hero is an intellectual power, his guiding vision a vision of the meaning of life, and his mission to lead men to the truth. History, as Carlyle reads it, is the story of the doings of the men who have labored successfully to satisfy this deepest of human cravings—the desire for knowledge. It is this point of view which makes his chapters on the poet and man of letters likely to prove for the beginner, the most illuminating pieces of criticism in the language. We shall here deal only with his central point and that especially in its relations to the ideas we have already developed.

In our study of *Culture and Anarchy* we laid special

emphasis on Arnold's three fold conception of culture. By culture Arnold means the search for perfection and he believes that mankind will advance toward it by developing three powers: the power of intellect, the power to see and appreciate beauty, and the power of morality. Sometimes he groups the first and second together and calls them Hellenism, the third he sometimes calls Hebraism, and he declares that mankind can progress in spiritual matters only by a combination of these two great forces, Hebraism and Hellenism. Sometimes he calls intellect Light, and beauty Sweetness, but under whatever metaphorical or historical form he speaks of them, he has the same three fold conception of mankind's ultimate good.

Carlyle in his chapter on the Hero as Poet seems to confuse and cut across Arnold's distinctions. In the first place, Carlyle notices the affinity between the poet and the prophet. The word *vates* he points out meant both. The *vates* prophet explained to mankind the moral aspects of life: he told men what to do. The *vates* poet was concerned with the beauty of the universe: he taught men what to love. But in the end Carlyle says, there come to the same thing. "But indeed these two provinces run into one another. The prophet too, has his eye on what we are to love: how else shall he know what it is we are to do?" He implies, though he does not say it in so many words, that good conduct, the best conduct, is beautiful too, that true beauty is also good. In this way he seems to confuse Arnold's distinction between beauty and morality.

In regard to the distinction between beauty and intellect Carlyle develops a thought similar to this. He does it in connection with poetry, which he says is simply music, song. All speech has in it some element of song, accent

is only the tune to which a man sings his words. In speech about the deepest and highest things of life the element of song is always greater. Everyone has felt many times how powerful emotion dignifies the speech of unlettered people. Death, profound religious experience, the presence of a great man or a great event, beautify and ennoble the words of the simplest man in just so far as he is sensitive to them. Song, Carlyle says, is the central essence of things. The Greeks fabled of Sphere Harmonies—it was the feeling they had of the inner structure of Nature that the soul of all her voices and utterances was perfect music. The scientist, if he goes deep enough, will find song, that is beauty, also. Mathematics or chemistry or zoology or philology may seem to be merely a matter of the intellect at first but when the student reaches the heart of it, when he sees it in its real essence, he will see that it is beautiful, and in thinking of it and speaking about it, if he be equal to his task there will be music in his thought and in his speech—not meter nor rhyme but that majestic and austere harmony which governs the operations of nature and reveals itself in her laws. It is not of all a man's sincerity and depth of vision which makes him a poet. "See deep enough and you see musically the heart of Nature *being* everywhere music, if you can only reach it." From this point of view beauty depends on what might be called and what Carlyle does call power of intellect, and the second of Arnold's distinctions is broken down.

This point of view of Carlyle's seems to be then that morality and intellect carried far enough end in beauty, that perfect life and great thought are beautiful as well. A second conclusion, still more valuable to the student,

may I think fairly be drawn from it though it is not stated in so many words. It is that without morality and without intellect one does not reach real beauty. This is in a word the point to our study so far. It is worth while to stop for a moment to consider what it means. The student who is fortunate enough during his stay in college to acquire enthusiasm for some great and beautiful thing, some poetry, some painting, some beautiful sculpture, or great music, is probably destined to one disappointment in after life. Perhaps he acquires enthusiasm for this book we are now reading, *Heroes and Hero Worship*. He finds someone else who also has enthusiasm for it and who thinks it "just fine" or the "grandest book I ever read." He goes on to talk about it and is suddenly surprised to find that all the meaning which the book has for him the other has missed entirely, that all the great questions in it which he has worked over the other has never thought about once, that the difficulties which he has struggled with the other has never attacked. He turns away in disgust feeling that this person does not know the book and has no right to love it. It is not, or should not be, the result of education to make one intolerant, but it should enable one, in connection with the things which one has studied, to distinguish the true from the false, it should enable one to understand that two things are lacking in such an "appreciation" of *Heroes and Hero Worship* first, intellect, a clear understanding of what the book says, and, second, morality, that is honesty, sincerity, and perseverance, which would have made the person careful not to pretend to see what he did not see, made him be sure that he agreed before he approved, and made him cour



ageously wrestle with the hard problems to the very limit of his powers before giving them up. From this point of view the three "faculties" which are often thought of as separately concerned with the intellectual, the beautiful, and the moral, appear not separate but interlinked and dependent, one on the other, and any system of education should develop them together if it is to produce that symmetry which is the ideal of humane studies.

It will be our task in the chapters following to apply these ideas to the study of poetry—and to the writing of themes. It may seem startling to have the same principles applied to the writing of a few themes that one would apply to the study of Shakespeare's plays. Nevertheless they do apply, writing in the one case as in the other is a matter of seeing truth and honestly expressing it in words. Only when expression is as nearly adequate as one can make it, is it entirely honest. The difference between the ordinary man and the genius lies first in what each sees in the world, and second in the degree to which each is faithful to his ideas. Too much cannot be said against that idea of writing, so common in the teaching of English composition, which makes it merely a matter of juggling with words, a trick to be acquired without much reference to the idea beneath the words. No one can teach a student to write in this way, no one can give him a style better than his ideas deserve. It is one of the most merciful facts in the universe that this is so, otherwise the greatest power and influence imaginable could be given to the man who is not fit to use it. Imitations are plentiful, many of them seem to be successful, but sooner or later the keenest

and truest minds find them out. The conception of style which existed in the mind of the Persian letter writer about which Newman speaks will not work. Good writing is a matter of good thinking. The writer's task is to use his intellect, to see into the truth of things, and to express his ideas as exactly as he can. In doing this last lies endless difficulty, and perhaps every man is doomed to a certain degree of failure. It is a task well worth years of painstaking labor for the man who has something to say. But it is a task which is not to be begun until one has ideas to express. Not everyone who works at the task faithfully and wisely and honestly will become a good writer, but he will do as well as he ought, as well as his ideas deserve. "if you see deep enough you will see musically." But to some extent every honest sincere person will see the real things of life and his expression of them will be valuable to some people. It may only be to his family in letters, or to his friends, or to the pupils he is teaching, but to say the truth to anybody is worth while.

## VI

### LITERATURE AND EDUCATION

IN the foregoing chapters we have been trying to get some clear notions as to the nature and meaning of education and the part which the study of literature may play in it. The purpose of this one is to sum up in a connected way what we have worked out—not particularly to advocate the study of literature but rather to point out what kind of value may be expected from it, what its function is.

The student who has understood the essays of Newman which we have just been reading will have a clear conception of two or three ideas which we may now recapitulate. The first of these is the relation of knowledge to information. Education is something more than storing the memory with facts. The essential part of it is assimilating these facts, reasoning about them, fitting them together, perceiving their relations and their significance. Only when this is done do they give power. Man's memory is short, most of what he learns he forgets quickly unless he has occasion to use and review it constantly. On the other hand the reasoning power remains and this power is the mark of the educated man.

Nevertheless the requirement of information is absolutely necessary. The student will never learn to think without facts nor will his thoughts be of any value unless this basis of fact is wide and accurate. He will never

go far unless he takes advantage of more than his own observation will yield. The results of other men's observation, stored up in books, arranged into orderly departments of knowledge, must be acquired by the student if his thought is to have as much range and validity as is at present possible.

The end and purpose of education then is to train the intellect and judgment by means of information in order *that it may really possess this information, may see its value and understand its significance.* This is the meaning of what Newman calls enlargement of the mind, culture, liberal knowledge, or the philosophical habit of mind.

Theoretically all that has been said is as true of professional as of liberal education. The best professional man will have the same trained intellect, the same broad view, the same understanding of the limitations and relations of the various sciences, the same sanity of judgment, the same wide capacity for sympathy and enjoyment, as will the gentleman. Unless he has this breadth and power of intellect he will not be able to master his professional knowledge but will be rather mastered by it.

This is only a formulation of the principles which are being followed more and more closely every day in the requirements of our best professional schools. It is this ideal which makes the attainment of a good education in law or medicine so formidable at present as regards the amount of time and money required. We have already noticed that Newman's idea is somewhat different. He seems to believe that the attainment of liberal knowledge is not so much a matter of the curriculum, of what specific subjects are studied, as of how they are studied,

from what point of view. Apparently he believes that the liberal minded professor of law or of engineering will treat his subject not merely from its own level but from above, will look upon it not as the main part of the world of knowledge but will see it in its true relation to other subjects and so teaching it will impart to his students not a narrow but rather a broad and liberal point of view. Whether this be possible or not we need not try to decide. Certain it is however that in the world one meets many men who have acquired liberal knowledge from a technical school, or from subsequent reading, or from no school or university whatever, while one finds many who, perhaps even looking for it, have missed it in a college of liberal arts.

Real education gives a man the power to act wisely by enabling him to understand as many as possible of the elements of a given situation. It involves having what is often called a Philosophy of Life, not learned or borrowed but thought out and made one's own. It means that the individual has some solution, the best that he can make, of the Riddle of the Universe, some notion of the meaning of life to him. Only this can give a man principles on which to act, only this can give his life conscious meaning. According to the depth and wisdom of his solution, we must believe, will be the sureness and consistency and power and rightness of his actions. According to the measure of this will his aims be intelligible, and will he have in his life confidence and peace.

It does not necessarily follow that the material offered by the university and the discipline imposed by her are the best possible for attaining this right solution. The aim of the university is to enable men to understand these

things, all our sciences are attempts at solutions, the best that great men could make, and the seriousness of the character of the university and the sanctity and reverence (deserved or not) in which her efforts have for ages been held are due to the fact that this has been her goal—to understand the laws of man's existence and the meaning of his life

So much for the nature and end of education whether liberal or useful. Looked at theoretically or examined practically, in proportion to their excellence the distinction between the two disappears. The best professional training is also liberal, it is only inadequate professional training—not training but only the acquirement of half understood and half true rules of thumb—which is servile and narrowing in its character, which marks out its possessor as emphatically not a gentleman. The end of any education is to enable a man to conceive for himself aims worth while and so to cultivate his powers as to enable him to realize them. Training which does this is education, any other is not.

Now a few words as to what may be called the materials or subject matter of education. Of these there are two sorts, first, the record of man's observation, what we call facts or information, second, the record of his thought. The two are nearly always found together, practically any book one will ever read contains both, the subject matter of every department of knowledge is a combination of the two. Each is at once a possession and a stimulus. Mastering information involves understanding how it is acquired and hence the ability to acquire more for oneself. The student does not understand another man's thought

until he thinks it for himself, which makes of it something new. The mind must be continually active, observant, thoughtful, questioning, inquiring, exploring for itself. This does not mean that the student should impudently set himself up as arbiter over the great thinkers of the past. The thoughts of great men, of all men, are to be treated not flippantly but with reverence, the judgment is to be suspended until one can go over the whole ground, but in the end nothing is true for him except what he himself can think. The reflection may be on him and not on the conclusion in question, but that does not change matters. By his own intellect and his own thoughts he must stand or fall, he cannot borrow another's and use them as his own unless he can think them, that is understand them and believe them, himself. A great man's thought which he cannot understand cannot be his, he cannot use it, it is not true for him. It is the bow of Ulysses which he cannot bend. One of the things which education should do is to teach a man his place and give him humility and reverence toward the things he has not. This is one of the things which Mark Twain represents as done in the heaven visited by Capt. Stormfield, it is certainly one of the ways of causing the Kingdom of God to come upon earth.

We come now to the question of the place of literature in education. Literature is a record, one of the fullest and most adequate that we possess, of man's thought about life. It contains information but the information it contains is not what makes it literature. The literary quality is the thought in it, the perception of significance and the adequate expression of this thought. The information

contained in literature is often of the simplest sort, but just in proportion as the literature is great and valuable the perception of significance (what Arnold called the criticism of life) in it is deep and just and true

Shakespeare's play, *Hamlet* conveys to us little in formation, and that only indirectly. The value of the play is not in the things it tells us so much as in the thoughts it gives rise to in us. The play is at once a picture of the moral and intellectual loveliness of human kind, the power of mind, the graciousness of character of which man is capable, and at the same time a pitiful and terrible picture of the operation of those relentless laws of our existence which allow such splendid qualities to be paralyzed by depression and wasted in hopeless struggle against circumstances with which the man's very nobility and thoughtfulness have rendered him powerless to cope. The greatness of the play lies in the way in which it portrays the conditions governing man's progress and advancement, its power lies in the fact that it reveals a tragic element not merely of Hamlet's world but of the world of every man who is striving to advance toward moral and intellectual ideals. It comes home to us all if we take it seriously and think about it. The thoughts we think about it, our interpretations of it, are many and different and they belong to us. The value of the play is the value of all great literature, that it stimulates and inspires these thoughts.

The province of literature in education is to stimulate thought, and especially that finer form of thought which we know by the name of imagination, to the end that one may measure, may weigh life as in a balance and find out what is good. Herein lies its value to education, here



lies the liberalizing tendency which has always and rightly been attributed to it

The subject matter of literature is broad, it is concerned with all that is most important to man, all knowledge in its bearing upon life, all questions of act and conduct, the most trivial and the deepest. It is not confined to love stories and to outdoor nature, though these play a large part, the sure instinct of the poets and of the race realizing their importance. To study it rightly is to learn to look at life beneath the surface, to separate the valuable from the worthless, the noble from the ignoble elements, the good from the bad, the beautiful from the ugly. To study it rightly is to learn the richness and fullness of life, its grandeur and its joy, its pitiful meanness and narrowness and vanity, its sublime and terrible tragedy.

To study it rightly is to have one's eyes opened to these things. What is the right way to study it? One sentence will do for an answer. That is, to think as you read. This means one should read a poem using the same care and concentration that one would find necessary in the case of a piece of difficult prose to grasp all that it has to say, all that is implied, the height and depth, the breadth and fullness of the poet's idea.

It is using the word thought in a wide sense when one says that thought can do this. It includes all the powers of a man's mind by which he perceives meaning in the world, his imagination and feelings as well as his reason—all the powers which operate not singly but together to produce every work of intellect worthy of the name.

We often divide the product of the mind into two

classes and say of the one, this conclusion I reached by reasoning the matter out, and of the other, that idea came to me intuitively, I knew that by intuition. Some truths we arrive at by logic, others seem to come of their own accord, borne on the wings of the imagination and the feelings. It is very common to think of literature as the product of the second of the two powers alone, the expression of the feelings, the imagination, the intuitions. There is in the minds of some people a certain contempt for literature and the fine arts based on the notion that reason and logic, what are thought of as the sounder and more intelligent powers of the mind, are very little concerned in their production.

One is told by those who understand psychology that the tendency of that science at the present time is to take the position (which seems unquestionably to be suggested by reason and common sense) that this division of the mind into parts, reason on the one side and intuition and feelings on the other is false, that a man's mind is essentially a unit, that what we call different powers act together, the reason supplementing the emotions and the emotions the reason, so that one's opinion on a given subject (if it is a real opinion) is the product of one's whole mind, not merely of a part of it. It is certain that all great literature contains both logic and feeling, both reason and intuition. As far as the understanding of poetry is concerned ability to think clearly in the sense in which that ability is required for mathematics or science is no less important than capacity to feel intensely. It is the neglect of this principle which betrays so many students into that sentimentality and formalism which are the undoing of so much of our study of English literature.

In this connection one may make a second statement closely related to the preceding,—that in order to excel in any real sense in mathematics or science or any closely logical subject the student will need to employ not merely his reason, his logical faculty, but also the same kind of feeling and intuition which are necessary in order to understand poetry. A fine mechanic, running or caring for a delicate machine, will show a certain feeling for the individuality of the machine, a certain knack or tact in allowing for its peculiarities, which is not logic but intuition. A great doctor or surgeon is likely to have this faculty developed to an extraordinary degree. A great scientific investigator has a feeling for the significance of an experiment or the form of a hypothesis which is apparently much like the artist's feeling that a certain line or color or word is right. The feelings and intuitions have their place in science just as reason and logic have theirs in literature.

When one says that literature is the record of man's thought about life one must use the word thought in this wide sense as including both the reasoning power and those powers which we name variously as the imagination, the feelings, or the intuitions.

The main thesis in this book is that the function of literature in education is to stimulate thought, to make one think more deeply about life, to understand more of its meaning and significance. It was first necessary to make this clearer by explaining at some length the meaning of thought as so used. It is now necessary to say a little more about the second part of the proposition, what we

have called the end of literature, seeing more of the meaning and significance of life

All men of an inquiring turn of mind, who have some measure of intellectual power, who are trying to search out for themselves the meaning of things, fall into one of three classes their aspiration is either to find out what is true, or what is good, or what is beautiful. The scientist is a type of the first, he is seeking to find out the truth. The preacher is a type of the second, he is seeking to find out what is good, his calling is to teach religion or morality. The artist is a type of the third, he is seeking for beauty. Literature is an art and its aim is the aim of the third class which I have mentioned—to find out and to portray beauty. What we call literary genius is first of all the ability which some men have in a high degree to perceive beauty, and second the ability to portray what they see. The two powers make up “the vision and the faculty divine.” The most important and the rarest thing is the ability to see it—the vision.

Now it will occur to everyone that by far the larger number of persons in the world do not intend to become artists, and that in most of the situations which confront a man in his life the important thing for him to know is what is true from what is false or what is right from what is wrong. It may seem a matter of little importance to be able to tell what is beautiful from what is ugly. The first two things will appear valuable and necessary, the third a pleasant but on the whole superfluous luxury. If this be so the training which literature offers, so far as this aspect of it is concerned, is to be put in the same class with a taste for good wine or tobacco or horses or pretty clothes—well enough in its way but not a

part of the serious business either of this world or the next

There is a common trick of our speech which will suggest and illustrate the point of view here taken in regard to this idea. If a student has been baffled by a proposition in geometry and finally, in despair of a solution, has turned to a friend with greater ability or more experience, and has seen his friend by some clever and masterful manipulation of the figure, by going perhaps a great way round, by calling in propositions which seemed at first to have no connection with this one, and by arranging all in orderly progression, at length arrive at the solution, he has justly been filled with admiration. How does he express his admiration? The solution arrived at is true, he sees that, but he says more than that. It has extraordinary merit, and to describe that he is likely to say, That was a beautiful demonstration.

A second instance of a different sort. One wishes to describe the life of a friend who was good not in the narrow sense of being faithful to ordinary duties but who has done for others not merely what could have been expected but, in wise and wonderful ways, more and better things than they knew how to ask for. Such a person is good in a way that few know how to be good, and one's comment is, That was a beautiful life.

The examples illustrate the curious way in which the true, the good, and the beautiful are blended in our ordinary ideas. What is true in the widest and deepest sense we feel is too fine to be described by a word which we use for what is true only in narrow and limited ways and we call it not merely true but beautiful. What is good in the highest degree we feel is too rare to be described

by a word used for a man who only keeps the commandments and we call it not merely good but beautiful. These are illustrations, not proofs, of an idea, heretofore developed, which is that truth and goodness in their highest forms are beautiful. This is only another way of saying that the man who is to reach the deepest truth or the highest virtue must have in his soul the instinct for beauty. In a very real sense the works of such a man, though done in the field of science or morality, are art as well. The words beautiful, true, and good describe various phases which unite to make up the total significance of things. Without the sense for all three and the sense of their kinship one's view of life, one's idea of truth, of beauty, or of morality is narrow and incomplete.

Many men approach the study of literature from another angle. They say, and find grave authorities for the statement, that art is play, they seek in literature amusement and pleasure, they occupy themselves in enjoying the grace and elegance and deliciousness of the musical language of poetry, in sporting among a thousand delicate fantasies, in marking the neat and clever or the majestic and sublime effects which can be produced by words. Such a study would seem to many students more profitable than the one we are making, and perhaps nearer the truth. They have been taught that the end of literature is pleasure, not instruction, and they believe in consequence that it is vain to attempt to give it a serious place in education.

Over and over again the statement has been made that the end of the greatest literature is pleasure, not instruction, and this statement has occasioned endless perplexity in the minds of those who have not understood it. Un

questionably there are many books from which one derives amusement and practically nothing else, and they are not to be despised on that account, but they are not a part of our greatest literature. There are two comments on the subject, apparently opposite, really consistent, which will suggest what is the true position. The first is by Dr Furnivall, from Furnivall and Munro's *Life of Shakespeare*. "The revived doctrine that the main object of poetry is to please amuse seems to me too contemptible to be discusst. I don't believe the mere wish to please ever produced anything better than toys." Another from Wordsworth's "Preface" to the *Lyrical Ballads*. "Nor let this necessity of producing immediate pleasure be considered as a degradation of the Poet's art. It is far otherwise. It is an acknowledgment of the beauty of the universe, an acknowledgment the more sincere, because not formal, but indirect, it is a task light and easy to him who looks at the world in the spirit of love. further, it is a homage paid to the native and naked dignity of man, to the grand elementary principle of pleasure, by which he knows, and feels, and lives and moves."

Between the two the question is merely verbal and the point is this: the business of the poet is to say the most serious and the truest things about life that his divine vision reveals to him. His business is to tell us the truth, to show us the way of life. But serious men have found and always do find, in the pursuit and contemplation of such ideas the highest type of pleasure. There is no amusement that does not pall at length and leave us restless and unsatisfied. The toilsome pursuit of knowledge seems to be the one thing in which man finds deep and enduring satisfaction. Of all his appetites this is the deepest rooted,

and of all his occupations this seems most worth while. If one understands pleasure in this high sense, the end of poetry is pleasure. If not, it is nearer the truth to say that its end is to instruct.

The role of literature in education is not contemptible from the standpoint of intellect; rather it calls forth in its interpretation the best powers of man's mind. In contemplating the beauty of the world and of man's life it does not work in opposition to his desires for truth and for righteousness, but rather points out the meaning of both. Its purpose is not primarily to furnish amusement for an idle hour, but to make plain our paths before us, to show us the way of life. That it gives pleasure, in so doing, is no reflection upon its worth or importance, but rather, as Wordsworth says, "an acknowledgment of the beauty of the universe . . . a homage paid to the native and naked dignity of man."



## VII

### WORDSWORTH

It is a fact about Wordsworth which all readers of him have felt and most writers about him have commented on that his works are a challenge. He wanted no admirers who were not disciples and it is true that men who have the courage of their convictions usually like him intensely or not at all. This challenge to the reader is put directly or implied in most of his poems and prose works, the following statement of it from the thirteenth book of the *Prelude* will do as well as any

Dearest Friend!

If thou partake the animating faith  
That poets even as Prophets each with each  
Connected in a mighty scheme of truth  
Have each his own peculiar faculty  
Heaven's gift a sense that fits him to perceive  
Objects unseen before thou wilt not blame  
The humblest of this band who dares to hope  
That unto him hath also been vouchsafed  
An insight that in some sort he possesses  
A privilege whereby a work of his  
Proceeding from a source of untaught things  
Creative and enduring may become  
A power like one of Nature's

He comes to us with an insight of his own with new tidings  
which in all calmness and humility he believes will make

his works become a power to be compared to the mighty winds, the flowing waters, or the life giving light of the sun. The reader who will meet the poet on his own terms need not worry about Romanticism, need not trouble about style nor poetic method, nor even poetic diction—he need only find out what the source of this insight is, what visions it reveals to Wordsworth, and then make up his mind what validity the poet's tidings have for him. To direct the student in doing this, to put him in the way of doing it for himself, is the aim of this chapter.

In the *Prelude* Wordsworth tells us the dramatic story of how his poetic vision came to him, it is the history of his intellectual life up to the age of twenty-eight. He seems to have been a normal boy, fond of sports, a lover of the woods and fields but with no very transcendental or poetic passion, fond of reading with as yet no idea of the conflict between books and nature which such utterances as the *Matthew Poems* have caused men to connect too insistently with his name. The four years from seventeen to twenty-one he spent at the University of Cambridge where he did well enough but not brilliantly. His last long vacation he spent on a walking tour in Switzerland. In the two journeys across France he became interested in the Revolution which had broken out the year before and with which, in a more or less unreflecting manner, he was in hearty sympathy.

In 1791 he took his degree of B.A. and left the university with no plans for the immediate future. His parents were dead and the money they left him had barely sufficed for his education. His guardians urged that he choose some profession which would insure him a livelihood, but this Wordsworth stubbornly refused to do.

Finally, however, partly yielding to this pressure, partly following his own inclination, he left for a period of residence in France, ostensibly to learn the language well enough to teach it. The Revolution speedily absorbed all his thoughts and interests. At Blois, under the influence (one might almost say the instruction) of Michel Beaupuy, a brilliant example of all that was most thoughtful and most noble in the revolutionary party, he came to see in the cause a deeper meaning and to support it with all the idealistic enthusiasm of his nature. To him it was a movement that was to destroy forever the monster of tyrannous oppression and to give to the down-trodden and the starving their rights to life and freedom. But it was to do more than this. It was to create a new society which would foster and develop the godlike strength and beauty which its votaries saw in every human soul. In this new age the ordinary man, no longer warped and ridden down by injustice, by war, by avarice, by ignorance and by false ideals, would far outstrip the heroes of the ages gone by. The deity who should effect this transformation was the goddess of Reason. Once the old was destroyed, the new society was to be erected by her laws, to follow no commands but hers, to have no religion but her service. Lifted to an ecstasy of hope and joy the poet, in common with thousands of the best minds of France awaited with confidence the coming of her era.

O pleasant exercise of hope and joy!  
For mighty were the auxiliars which then stood  
Upon our side us who were strong in love!  
Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive  
But to be young was very Heaven! O times  
In which the meager stale forbidding ways



famous *Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Political Justice* and from this book, the bible of the English sympathizers in the Revolution, Wordsworth tried to work out for himself the philosophy of reason which he believed was the key to truth. The whole fantastic structure of Godwin's political theory was based on the principle that nothing was to be believed which could not be demonstrated by reason and logic. This principle Wordsworth attempted to make the rule of his thought. Immediately he plunged into a sea of perplexities and doubts, he was soon unable to tell what he did or did not believe and true and false became only names which carried with them no sense of conviction. He had in his soul an intense craving for knowledge and faith, no distractions could lull this craving, no authority could satisfy it with a solution not sanctioned by his own thought. The result was that he sank into despondency and pessimism that cold and yet acute suffering which comes with the malady of thought unsatisfied the sense that the universe is a pathless waste and the ways of God past finding out.

So I fare!

Dragging all precepts judgment maxims creeds  
 Like culprits to the bar calling the mind  
 Suspiciously to establish in plain day  
 Her titles and her honours now believing  
 Now disbelieving endlessly perplexed  
 With impulse motive right and wrong the ground  
 Of obligation what the rule and whence  
 The sanctions till demanding formal proof  
 And seeking it in every thing I lost  
 All feeling of one self and in for  
 Sick wearied out with contradictions  
 Milled up moral questions in the air.

*Prelude XI 293-303*

Though worked out in terms of political thought, Wordsworth's pessimism was in reality due to his disappointment in his search for knowledge, the sick and weary sense of conflict with problems of life too mysterious for the human mind to solve, or, worse yet, incapable of solution, the sense of living in a world which is a moral chaos where nothing is but matter and where all things of the spirit are but mocking shadows. Except for the *Borderers* which is an eloquent picture of his moral despair, he stopped writing poetry. He lost his feeling for the loveliness of Nature, trying to reason about her beauties "by rules of mimic art transferred to things above all art," they turned to bitterness in his soul. Instead he took refuge in science, in that most exact and abstract science of all—mathematics—seeking somewhere for truth which would compel acceptance and would form a solid foundation for his thought. Meanwhile poor, with few friends, without occupation, cut off from the society of his sister (he had been forbidden her guardian's house pending his choice of a career), he had every sort of external cause to increase his despondency.

At the beginning of 1795 a friend of Wordsworth's, Ransley Calvert, died, leaving him a legacy which, though small, was enough to make him independent. With it he was able to settle down with his sister Dorothy in the autumn of the same year at Racedown in Dorsetshire to a quiet and very frugal life. Soon after he met Coleridge, of whom he gradually saw more and more until in July 1797 the Wordsworths moved to Alfoxden, two miles from the home of Coleridge at Nether Stowey, in order that the two poets might be together. During these years of quiet and peace, under the sympathetic and cheerful in

fluence of his sister and stimulated by the eager intellect of Coleridge, Wordsworth worked out the solution of his intellectual difficulties. Some men under the same circumstances, misled by the abuse of analysis, would have ended by denying the validity of all thought, would have sought for guidance only in feeling, no matter how animal and irrational, or would have become slowly absorbed in comfortable commerce with the material things of life. Wordsworth did none of these. Too tenacious and too spiritual to give up the problem, too moderate and too sane to fall under the mere domination of the feelings, he worked out his theory of the imagination as a perceptive power. He did not reject the intellect, instead he widened its scope. By imagination he meant the power of seeing behind the external shows of things their real significance, their beauty. All men see with the bodily eye the things which nature and man spread out before them, mountain, plain, and stream, deeds of kindness or of hate—the complex pageant of life. But only the man with imagination looks behind, sees and understands the meaning of the objects which to most men are meaningless. A thousand men pass a certain spot daily and see nothing remarkable about it. A painter makes a picture of it, portraying and explaining the meaning, the beauty, which he alone perceives in it and the thousand understand and marvel that they had been so blind. A thousand men see daily some familiar phenomenon of nature. The scientist sees it, connects it with other apparently unrelated facts, grasps finally its real meaning and the thousand understand, marveling they had not understood before. In the one case and in the other we have an exercise of the imagination as Wordsworth defined it. It is not the power

of creating what never existed before, nor of seeing wild and fantastic resemblances, the face of a man in the moon. It is rather the power of seeing reality, the eye of the mind which sees what the bodily eye cannot, an auxiliary light which makes clear what is otherwise confused and meaningless. It does what Newman conceived to be the function of reason, only Wordsworth carries it further, past the limitations and fetters of logic, out of the matters of everyday into the domains of the spirit, up to the heights from which man sees the ultimate problems of life and nature, face to face with God.

Imagination which in truth  
Is but another name for absolute power  
And clearest insight amplitude of mind  
And Reason in her most exalted mood

For Wordsworth there was no pleasure in life comparable to the pleasures of the imagination. When he says that the end of poetry is pleasure one must remember his many statements that the highest pleasure comes from knowledge, from thought. Imagination and love, thought and pleasure, are for him inseparably connected.

Imagination having been our theme  
So also hath that intellectual Love  
For they are each in each and cannot stand  
Dividually \*

For him "Beauty is truth, truth beauty" in a clearer sense perhaps than for Keats. Poetry is a vision of the world as it really is. It is only a tribute to the gracious

\* *Prelude* XIV, 169-92

\* *Prelude* XIV 208-9



composition of the universe and of man's own nature to say that this knowledge begins in love and ends in pleasure.

So much for Wordsworth's faculty of vision. What is it that he saw? What kind of a universe is it that is revealed to him by his poetic imagination? There is no answer to this question but his poetry, and of his poetry especially that of his most inspired years, from 1798 to 1815. In the fragment of the *Recluse*—that glorious table of contents of all that he hoped to write—he gives in a few lines the kernel of it. In the first place this poet of nature tells us that all that he writes applies directly to the mind of man,

the Mind of Man

My haunt and the main region of my song

The beautiful out door world of nature is to Wordsworth a revelation of a divinity, a meaning (one searches for a word, non theological, not Christian, and yet religious in the highest sense, for in his most inspired poetry Wordsworth is a prophet of God rather than a Christian), which is at once outside man's nature and yet akin to something within. It is the attempt of all his greatest poetry to grasp and explain this connection. He hints at it in the *Recluse*

while my voice proclaims  
How exquisitely the individual Mind  
(And the progressive powers perhaps no less  
Of the whole species) to the external World  
Is fitted—and how exquisitely too—  
Theme this I but little heard of among men—  
The external World is fitted to the Mind.'

A hundred passages in his poetry illustrate the spiritual meaning which the beautiful and the sublime in nature had for him. In the *Lines Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey* he puts more clearly perhaps than in any other single passage, the kinship of this divinity without to that within man's soul

And I have felt  
A presence that disturbs me with the joy  
Of elevated thoughts whose use is sublime  
Of something far more deeply interfused  
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns  
And the round ocean and the living air  
And the blue sky and in the mind of man  
A motion and a spirit that impels  
All thinking things all objects of all thought  
And rolls through all things

This imaginative perception this faith (for the two terms are identical) had for Wordsworth the power of transmuting pain and sorrow into strength. He speaks of beauty and of fear as working to the same end in the development of his mind. At the end of the story of Margaret in the first Book of the *Excursion* the Wanderer says (as Wordsworth first wrote it)

I will remember that those very places  
Those weeds and the high spear grass on that wall  
By mist and silent run drops sliered o'er  
As once I passed did to my heart convey  
So still an image of tranquillity  
So calm and still and looked so beautiful  
Amid the uneasy thoughts which filled my mind  
That what we feel of sorrow and despair

From ruin and from change and all the grief  
 That passing shews of Being leave behind  
 Appeared an idle dream that could not live  
 Where meditation was I turned away  
 And walked along my road in happiness \*

It is something of this idea evidently that he is trying to express in those difficult lines of the twelfth book of the *Prelude*

When in the blessed hours  
 Of early love the loved one at my side  
 I roamed in daily presence of this scene  
 Upon the naked pool and dreary crags  
 And on the melancholy beacon fell  
 A spirit of pleasure and youth's golden gleam  
 And think ye not with radiance more sublime  
 For these remembrances and for the power  
 They had left behind? So feeling comes in and  
 Of feeling and diversity of strength  
 Attends us if but once we have been strong

The greatest poetry has this in common with all great thought, be it science, philosophy, or religion, that it is an expression of faith. No one of them can be produced without imagination, no one of them can be understood or can be true except for him who apprehends it by the aid of the same faculty in his own mind. In the presence of a great body of poetic thought such as is contained in the works of Wordsworth one feels the futility of any analysis of technique, of any historical criticism, until the central idea which he was trying to express has first been

\* *Excursion* I 542-54. The version usually printed is the result of alterations made in 1845 and may be taken as the expression of the way in which Wordsworth identified the poetic faith of his early life with the Christianity of his later years.

<sup>1</sup> *Prelude* XII 261-71.

*understood Here is something to be laid hold of by meditation, to be tried by thought, to be taken by each for its value to him towards the solution of that mystery of life which each must solve for himself*

All this is not philosophy but poetry They are made of the same life-stuff (to use a phrase of Bradley's), but the connections are underground Wordsworth's poetical creed is not susceptible of translation without loss into *philosophy or science It must be read in his own words* and understood from the point of view from which it was written Yet poets, philosophers, and scientists, with all their differences, are attacking the same ultimate problem, with the same powers of mind human the one and the other, and infinitely stimulating and suggestive the one to the other Hence the value of Wordsworth's poetry to the student who aspires to a liberal education

## VIII

### POPE

WORDSWORTH'S life was led in retirement and his poetry was the product of solitary thought. He deals with society, it is true, but his opinions are those of a recluse about a life of which he is hardly a part. Pope affects in many poems to look upon the world from the same point of view, but as a matter of fact his interests and his real life were bound up with society and his most characteristic work is the artificial expression of an artificial mode of existence.

When Pope about 1706, then a young man of eighteen, set out to make his fortune in literature, that profession was in a very prosperous condition, due to the generous *patronage of the statesmen and politicians of the day*. These men were, many of them scholars and judges of literature, and, what was more important, good writers were a party necessity. The result was prosperity in the shape of pensions and of offices, which were often sinecures amounting to the same thing, for those members of the literary profession who would use their talents in the support of one party or the other.

Almost every literary man of the time profited by this patronage. It was bestowed in no vulgar or brutal way, there was no demand for falsehood or underhand dealing, nothing to suggest bribery. A literary man wrote on the political subjects which buoyed the pens of all his fellows.

his work was noticed and rewarded by the leaders of his party when opportunity gave them the power by such favors as they deemed it to deserve. This patronage was often generous in a high sense: statesmen supported literary men who were too old to work, they educated promising boys, occasionally they conferred favors upon a man to keep him neutral, and instances are not lacking of pensions given by one party to a man whose life had been spent *in the service of the other*. The author was made subservient to the man of affairs but he was courteously treated and confined in a gilded cage.

It is not the least of Pope's literary achievements, and no small proof of the way in which he understood the social conditions of his time, that he made the greatest fortune of any writer of his day while maintaining his political independence and keeping entirely aloof from the political hack work upon which his fellows depended for their existence. The vogue of literature among the wealthier classes at the beginning of the eighteenth century made the publishing business, for the first time in its history, profitable on some such scale as it is to-day. The result was a rapid increase in the remuneration paid by publishers to authors. While he was still almost an unknown youth Pope received from Tonson a flattering letter asking for any poems which he, Pope, might care to print. Half-a-dozen years later Pope undertook, in conjunction with Tonson's rival Iintot, a translation of Homer on terms much more liberal than any publisher had dreamed of allowing an author before. The work occupied the years from 1715 to 1726, Pope receiving for it in all about \$45,000, a sum sufficient to make him independent for life.

Meanwhile Pope kept on intimate terms with prominent men of both parties, and he was skillful enough to keep them interested in his position without declaring for one side or the other. The result was that when, under the Georges and the Whigs, political patronage began to decline, he had nothing to fear. The history of Pope's worldly success is one evidence of the way in which he understood his age. In poetry his success was no less remarkable, and we must turn now to those works which made him at once the intellectual dictator of his age and perhaps the best interpreter of that age to future generations.

Pope has left us his idea of the organization of the universe and his theories of literature in two carefully elaborated poems. A reader of the present day will pretty certainly find both poems disappointing. He will see in them only ideas which are fantastic and absurd on the one hand, or drearily commonplace on the other. Both show Pope's lack of capacity for sustained logical thought, and the smug narrowness of his outlook on life. They readily suggest the idea that if literature is an expression of thought, if a man must be a thinker in order to be a poet, then Pope was not a poet but only a clever versifier. Yet one must remember that thousands of men of sense and taste have derived intellectual stimulus and pleasure from his works. While the opinions of others cannot determine the value of Pope's poetry to us, it is only reasonable that we should, in our study of him, try to see what it is in him which others have found worthy of approval.

It will not do to say that he was a poor thinker but a clever versifier and to attribute his reputation to that. *He has not gained his readers by juggling nonsense syllables.*

bles into heroic couplets. The aptness of his verse is only an expression of the aptness of his thought: the value of that thought is the value of his poetry. If we can establish this, the question whether his thought is of sufficient importance to earn for him the name of poet may be left to each individual or to the debating societies.

The *Essay on Man* the central scheme of which is Pope's only in the sense that he accepted it and attempted to promulgate it (the main outlines he owed, as he acknowledged, to his friend Bolingbroke), is an argument justifying the universe as it is. The world is God's handiwork, Pope argues, and He is perfect: therefore it must be right. Man is so imperfect that it is not his place to criticise it, that some things do not seem to him perfectly arranged is due to the narrowness of the human point of view, if he will only reflect a little he will see that many things which appear wrong are really necessary to the perfect plan of the whole. For example, man's very imperfection is suited to the particular place he occupies in the scale of being, which extends in an unbroken chain from the lowest forms of life to the highest. Were man more perfect than he is he would be unsuited to his place, the chain would be broken, and the plan of the whole marred.

From man's imperfections, again, arise what good he is capable of. Self-love (a term which Pope uses as expressing the sum of all the passions), which unrestrained produces all the evil in his nature, when controlled by reason produces all the good. The passions of rulers in conflict with those of the ruled result in common justice. Man seeking his own good finds the good of his fellows necessary to it, so that in the end enlightened self-love is the love of all mankind.



Happiness depends not upon position or perfection, but upon content. True virtue implies that man should neither rise to the level of the gods nor sink to that of the beasts, but that he should act well his part as a man. The self-love of all men drives them to seek happiness. Their reason tells them that only in virtue, so defined, is it to be found, so that, in the end, self-love, the principle which is responsible for all the waywardness of mankind, is responsible also for all the virtue.

Pope shows us man forever bound to imperfection, his mind such a confusion that real knowledge is impossible, his happiness lying in contentment with what he has, rather than in the striving for what is beyond him. Most of the things man loves are mere vanity, but he is gifted with a merciful blindness to this fact. Upon his ignorance and delusion are based such happiness as he can achieve. To us this may sound like Macbeth's bitter cry of disillusionment.

To morrow and to morrow and to morrow  
 Creeps in this petty pace from day to day  
 To the last syllable of recorded time  
 And all our yesterdays have lighted fools  
 The way to dusty death. Out, out brief candle!  
 Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player  
 That struts and frets his hour upon the stage  
 And then is heard no more. It is a tale  
 Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury  
 Signifying nothing.

The difference is that what is to Macbeth's ardent nature, stretching out to grasp a kingdom, the last vision of despair, is to Pope, sitting in his smug garden, the basis of a philosophy of content.

*Macbeth* V v

Pope's idea of human nature is nearly the reverse of Wordsworth's. To the one man is petty and impotent to the other a being in whose soul dwells the glory of the ocean and the sky and all beautiful illimitable things. Pope would have him remain content. Wordsworth finds him nothing except when he can rise above his ordinary self.

Pope's gospel of content is not very congenial to a generation like our own, which has for the central point in its religion a faith in a spiritual evolution which is not to cease until man is the equal of the gods—a generation which glorifies discontent and would seek progress even in heaven. Besides our natural hostility to his ideas we find in his poem logical absurdities which make it impossible to follow him or even to take his system as a whole seriously. He assumes that God is perfect in an argument designed to justify the ways of God to man, and the assumption is the basis of his proof. He tells us that man is too blind and ignorant to judge God's work, which makes us ask how he can presume to commend. But what is true of the whole is not true of the parts. Reading the poem couplet by couplet (as Pope wrote it) we find in a hundred places flashes of keen common sense and shrewd observation which go straight to the mark and impress us instantly with their truth.

Worth makes the man and want of it the fellow  
The rest is all but leather and prunella

What can ennoble sots or slaves or cowards?  
Alas! not all the blood of all the Howards

A Wit's a feather and a Chief's a rod  
An honest Man's the noblest work of God \*

\* *Essay on Man* IV 203-4 215 6 and 247 8

Any dictionary of quotations will supply hundreds of other examples, sayings which are used daily by people who never read Pope and probably do not know that he wrote them. These flashes of Pope's wit are not always true for all times and places and conditions. Like all utterances of common sense they hold only for common situations. They are brilliant expressions of what was true in Pope's world and they hold in the social world of to-day. They are the product of a mind with great power of seeing truth at close range, and are at once the most characteristic and the best part of his poetry. They are not expressions of what everybody thought but could not say, but rather are what other people saw dimly and Pope clearly. "What oft was thought but ne'er so well expressed" does not do them justice. The infinite pains Pope took in expressing them were partly spent in refining his thought. Not that he was always faithful to it: such was his love of polished rhythm that sometimes he said not what he meant but what he could best in ten syllables with a certain rhyme, as human poets will, such passages, however, are not the ornaments of his poetry, they are rather blotches on it.

Pope's theory of literature, as expressed in the *Essay on Criticism* and carried out in his works is that the poet should be an oracle of intelligence and common sense. All the terms which he uses for the poetic faculty, all the words of praise for good poetry, mean what we should mean by good taste and reasonableness as opposed to dullness and crudeness on the one hand and to imagination on the other.

He says that the poet should follow Nature and be guided

by her He means not all nature but rather the normal, the average, the intelligible All life and all of the world was not beautiful to him, some things were too low and undignified for poetry Other ideas, those which fall within the province of the mystical and the ideal, were to him unfit for poetry because too vague and wild to be intelligible to his unimaginative nature He cut himself off from all that was above common sense as well as all that was below it No other quality that he possessed was so characteristic of the age in which he lived, of its religion and art no less than of its politics and practical life!

✓ "Order" to Pope is Heaven's first law " By it he means the order of common sense He advises the poet to follow Nature, not in the rough, but to study her in the classic authors who will show him her most natural and normal aspects—Nature methodized He might have gone farther and advised the poet to study nature in the Latin critics, for this translator of Homer read him by the rules of Horace and was always a little suspicious of the Greek's attempts to 'snatch a grace beyond the reach of art'

Learning was to Pope a development of the judgment by a study of the authors who were the exponents of that decorum which he believed to be the highest glory of earth or heaven The history of criticism to him was the history of the discovery of these rules of order and decorum by the ancients, their subversion to "Gothic" ignorance and grotesque mysticism during the "Dark Ages," and their subsequent triumph which began in England in the sixteenth century and was fully realized in his own day

Wit is a term which he uses in a general way for the poetic and intellectual faculty His conception of it, like

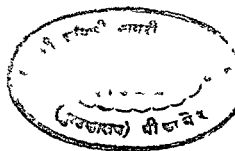
most of his ideas, is plain enough on the level of common sense but has no logical clearness. It is in general quickness and alertness of mind, neither heavy nor dull nor silly nor mystic. Sometimes he includes in it the restraining judgment, sometimes not, in which latter case it is wit and sense together which constitute the literary faculty.

Poetry was to Pope, as will be seen, the expression of thought. His idea of it differed from Wordsworth's essentially in this, that he did not recognize the imagination as an intellectual power, and he tried as best he could to suppress it, and always to guide his feelings by the reason. His vision lay in the world of everyday, in that world it is clear and keen, but for that world alone is it true.

As might be expected Pope is at his best in poems which call into play his faculty of saying keen things about the people around him, that is in his satires. To us a great deal of their point is lost because we are too far from his time to understand without great labor much that he says. But it is still possible to catch enough of this point to illustrate the truth of what I say. The satires show often his personal littleness and meanness. The history of them and of the causes by which they were provoked is a long tissue of vindictiveness, deceit and vanity, but at the same time one feels, in spite of his personal shortcomings, that Pope really held a brief for wit as against dullness, which fact gives these poems their appeal. They cut as keenly as a razor and show Pope's extraordinary ability to seize on every aberration from taste and sense and hold it up to ridicule.

Such poetry is the expression of qualities greatly admired in the eighteenth century and they made Pope

eventually literary dictator to his time. These qualities, whatever their value as compared with the imaginative idealism of other ages, were distinctly intellectual. The value of Pope's poetry as we have said is the value of his thought, which is only mirrored in his language. It was neat rather than profound, keen rather than noble, sensible rather than ideal, but no less thought



## IX

### MILTON

MILTON'S work, much more than that of any other of the great English poets, is the possession of the few, and Milton himself, though he lived in the full stress and swing of the revolutionary politics of his day, a fighter and a reformer, was really an isolated figure, having very little intimate human relationship with those around him. Of Milton the youth, the friend of Wotton, the writer of Italian sonnets and of the matchless early poems, this is not true, but he readily deserted the lyric beauty of his earlier poetic visions and the gracious privacy of his early life for the stern battle of the reformer with the stubborn facts of everyday and he never returned to the point of view he had abandoned. As a reformer he was not appreciated, his ideas were never adopted by his party, they were never carried out, but undismayed he turned from the politics of England to those of the universe, and he finished his career by writing his majestic tragedy of *Samson Agonistes* which had this much in common with his own story that like Samson he felt himself an instrument of God, sent to do His work defeated by his enemies, blinded, and despised but, in the triumph of his great poem, which partly came before his death, mightily victorious over them in the end.

Milton lived from 1608 to 1674. The years from 1625 to 1632, the seventeenth to the twenty-fourth of his life,

he spent at Cambridge. The six years following he spent in studious leisure at Horton, supported by his father, preparing himself for his chosen vocation of poetry. In 1638 he went abroad to complete his studies, but returned the next year, sooner than he had planned, when the threatened outbreak of the Revolution offered him a chance to serve his country, or, as some will prefer to say, his party. Milton was heart and soul a Puritan, no less in his poetry than in his political pamphlets, and, for the sake of the light which it throws on his character and work, it is worth while to stop for a brief consideration of this party to which he gave up twenty years of his life and to whom he was true until his death.

The Reformation of Henry VIII's reign had left in England three parties in ecclesiastical matters. (1) those whose sympathies were with the Roman Church and who would have liked to see the English Church reunited with it, (2) the extreme reformers who would have liked to see the Reformation go much further than it did, who paid no reverence to the traditions of any church but instead considered the Bible as the sole revelation of God's will to man, and (3) the orthodox Church of England party which stood half way between the two, denying the authority of the Pope but maintaining a belief in the traditions of the church as one authoritative expression of the divine plan of salvation, and claiming that the true primitive doctrines and practices of the one Catholic Church were better represented by the English than by the Roman communion.

All through the reign of Elizabeth these three parties existed. But the fear of Roman Catholic plots at home and of Spanish invasion from abroad led patriotic English



men to disregard their own differences in order to defend their Queen and their country from the double peril Elizabeth, with the tact and sagacity of her family, made the most of this bond of unity. She persecuted both Roman and Puritan extremists, but was very chary of making martyrs of either and altogether succeeded at the difficult task of maintaining the equilibrium.

Her successors the Stuarts, were unequal to this task. Their sympathies went rather towards the 'High Church' end of the scale which by the exasperated Puritan element, was fiercely branded as papistical. Religious troubles were complicated by difficulties between King and Parliament over questions of taxation. The result was the rebellion of 1640. When it broke out the zeal and fury of the Puritan party, all the fiercer for having been held back for a century, went to extremes which were all the more terrible for the restrained determination with which they were carried out. The austere and lofty vision of these terrible reformers and invincible fighters can best be expressed by the words which were then in every mind " *The kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven* ". They were fired by the idea of reorganizing the state on the basis not of man's law but of God's, as revealed in His Word. No wonder they could trample under foot the English constitution and the English king when they seemed to stand in the way of that glorious realization. No wonder they despised ordinary frivolities and pleasures. They felt themselves soldiers and prophets of the Lord with His work to do, and the sincerity of their belief made for one thing the army of Cromwell one of the most wonderful fighting machines the world has ever known.

For direction, for authority, for light, the Puritan looked, as we have said, to the Scriptures interpreted by each man according to his own inner light. As the element of moral earnestness which we have just been considering was responsible for the unity and practical fighting strength of the Puritan party, so is this second element, the nature of their authority, responsible for their divergence one from another and for their practical weakness. They tended to deny tradition and to set little store by earthly learning, each man was a law unto himself, without always being very tolerant of the different views of his neighbors, hence their quarrels and dissensions, hence their inability to hold together once they had achieved a victory. They had a bond of unity while they were in a state of opposition to an orthodoxy already established, but when this was overthrown they had neither an orthodoxy to establish in its stead nor the breadth and wisdom (which would have been little less than miraculous in that age) to set up a regime of complete toleration. Whatever the abstract merits of their creed, it resulted practically in religious and political anarchy or in the rule of the less sincere.

It is this second element in Puritanism—the fact that each was a law unto himself, which makes the type so hard to define, which enables one party to include such diverse natures as Milton, Cromwell, and Bunyan. It is this element which was responsible for the numberless stupid and cruel acts of which the Puritans were capable. To the stupid the rule of life was their own stupidity, to the cruel their own cruelty. It is this which made Puritanism so fruitful in the production of that worst of all classes of hypocrites—those who deceive even themselves. But, on the other hand, it is this element which enabled

Puritanism to take such lofty forms in the case of the more intelligent and sincere, which gave to the best of the party an independence of thought hardly known from the days of the non-theological Greeks until science broke the fetters of theology in our own day. If the stupid were no longer compelled to respect the opinions of the wise, neither were the wise in bondage to the stupid. Geniuses like Milton and Bunyan were free to map out their own paths and enrich our literature with religious works which have not been equalled since the Middle Ages when Christian theology was created.

The "inner light" by which the Puritan interpreted the Scriptures and ruled his life, was nothing more nor less than the power of thought—what Wordsworth would have called imagination, and Pope reason. In the case of the stupid and the ignorant this thought is narrow and false by cutting themselves off from all guidance except the Bible most of the Puritans, as Arnold well says, mis understood even that. But in the case of men capable of getting from books, as did Milton, or from life as did Bunyan, commentary on the Bible, the result was to do for us what all great thought does, open up new vistas and throw new light on the task which life forces upon us all—to understand its mystery and its meaning.

In the case of Milton as in that of any other poet worthy of the name, it is not possible to give in such form as this the real extent and essence of his thought, but only to give the student some inkling of its trend, which will serve its full purpose if it whets his interest and directs him in his search for that meaning which it will require the work of years fully to attain.

Milton's early poetry is for the most part tentative and experimental, he is casting about for subjects, trying his powers in this direction and that. The results have the interest that attaches to every stage of the development of so great a mind but an interest inferior to that of his more important later works. In *L Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* he is pondering on the pleasures of sense as contrasted with the pleasures of thought, choosing between "the hedge row elms, on hillocks green,"

While the ploughman near at hand  
Whistles o'er the furrowed land  
And the milkmaid singeth blithe  
And the mower whets his scythe  
And every shepherd tells his tale  
Under the hawthorn in the dale

and, on the other side, the high lonely tower of the student, at midnight meditation on life and immortality. He makes no choice but every reader feels that the choice is made for him. Johnson found, he says, no mirth in *Il Penseroso* but some melancholy (which we must here translate as thought or meditation) in *L Allegro*. He is right the poems express not two characters but one—John Milton—and only a part of him. Ravishing as they are in their beauty, the poems are to him only

Such sights as youthful poets dream  
On summer eves by haunted stream

There is in them nothing of the sublimity of thought that was to belong to the full grown man

*Comus* is another dream of the youthful poet, another picture full of infinite grace and delicacy of the pleasures

of sense, with just the touch of serious thought which marks Milton as a Puritan in all his works. He is still at play, he has not yet discovered all his powers, but he has one quality in these three poems which in his later work he was to lose, the quality of beauty, in the restricted sense of that word, as opposed to grandeur or sublimity. Even poets must pay the price of their gifts, and when Milton in the strength of his poetic manhood applies himself to "Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme," his work has no more of this grace and loveliness of his youth when he could still allow himself to "sleeve the time carelessly, as they did in the golden world."

The sonnets of the period of the Rebellion show the gradual change in Milton's point of view and habits of thought. His mind is more and more engrossed in politics and the stern Hebraistic Puritan religion. In *Paradise Lost* the change is complete. The Milton who now, after twenty years, turns again wholly to poetry is another man.

*Paradise Lost* gives us in poetic form Milton's conception of the organization of the universe and his explanation of our sinful state. So extensive has been the influence of the poem, the majestic pageant which it unfolds, has taken such hold of the imaginations of the English people, that in the minds of a whole multitude Milton's account of the events of man's creation and fall is confused with that of the Bible itself and has become a part of the traditional ideas of the race. And yet few people upon a careful examination would find the poem satisfactory as a system of thought. For all the use that the Christian religion has made of it, Milton's system can hardly be squared with what is ordinarily considered Christian belief. Milton was not a philosopher and has produced nothing